SHADOW IN THE DARK

Second Edition

By Aygun Aliyeva

Editor Catherine Land

Illustrations by Maria Mughal

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PART I. THE AGE OF THE GREAT FEELING

Long before names, long before words, there was only one thing — the Feeling. Not a god, not an element, but the will to live and to love itself,

searching for a shape to wear. It entered stone, because stone knew how to wait. It entered water, because water knew how to flow. So began a story that has no single beginning — because it begins again in every stone, every drop, every heart willing to receive it.

If one day you find yourself wondering where your anger comes from, or your tenderness, or your pull toward the light or toward the dark — remember: long before you, these same forces were choosing what shape to be born in. Sulfur, hydrogen, light — these are not simply substances. They are three ancient answers to one question: how to love. The rest of this book is about that.

Chapter 1. A History of Time

Long, long ago, in a world infinitely far from ours, in a distant galaxy, on a lifeless star high above the clouds, a powerful feeling awoke — and desired to live and to love in that very instant. In that moment something magical began. All around lay a desert, until a feeling awoke that wanted to kiss the sands, to listen to the whisper of the wind, and to fill the emptiness. The feeling took shape, clothed itself in matter, and settled into a stone, to live there forever.

The stone sensed the vibrations around it and reflected magnetic waves, which echoed again and again around it. The stone grew larger and larger, multiplied, and took on other forms and shapes. It learned to gather drops of water on its surface. In time an ocean formed in the middle of the desert. It learned to make air beneath the water and to breathe it. Soon the feeling grew strong enough to fulfill its longing — to live and to love.

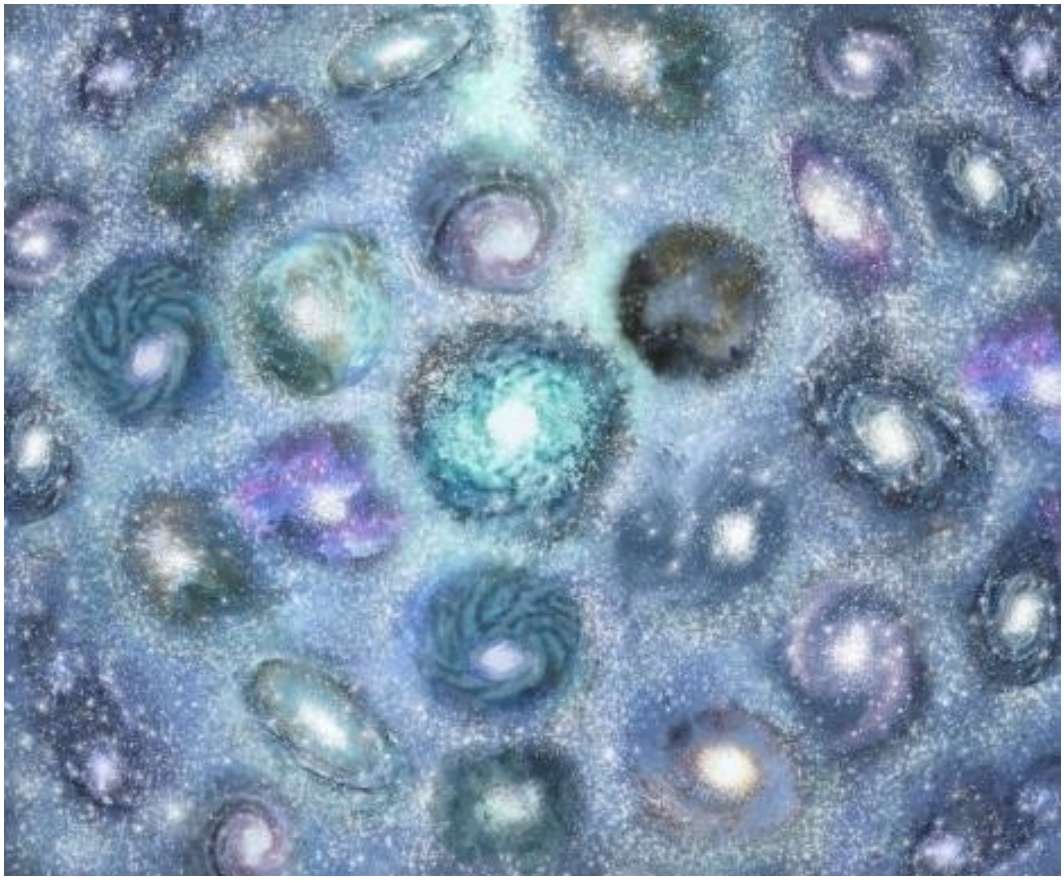
The feeling took hold of the star and created a multitude of magnificent images out of love and desire. The power of this feeling reached out to other stars of the Galaxy. The Great Feeling gave birth to life and spread throughout the universe through the grace of the angels of the cosmos. The angels of the cosmos are present everywhere in the Galaxy. They help when your will is pure. They carry good will, strength, and soul.

One of the reasons new life began was the need to change the state of the elements, to bring inorganic matter to life, and to find balance — to become, out of nothing material, something strong, beautiful, and useful for the purposes of life. When the power of life and love touched the world, the creator brought forth many different living beings, full of beauty and perfection. A great multitude of different forms and colors. Some creatures seemed better than others, wiser and stronger, but all of them carried within them the same love and light, regardless of outward form or displays of power. Every galaxy touched by the power of life and love gave birth to

its own unique creation. Thus arose a great symbiosis, in which all beings lived together in peace and harmony.

For all their differences, everything was connected and lived in balance.

[Space for infographic: a map of the universe — the human Galaxy at the center, Beastoria and Andromeda to the right, ocean and forest worlds along the edges.]



If you look at the map of the Universe, at its center lies the human Galaxy, and all the other solar systems surround it. Life reached the stars from the very far left edge of the universe to the far right, where ocean worlds give way to forest worlds.

The galaxy called Beastoria lies far to the right of the human galaxy. The power of life and love gave birth there to little fairies — beautiful, tiny creatures full of kindness and wisdom, purity, light, and love. They held the power to grant wishes. This is what made them special and set them apart from all other beings in the universe.

Life in Beastoria sheltered the brightest of creatures, with shining hearts and souls. Among them were fairies, elves, and all the other beasts of the universe. Their lands were covered in wondrous flowers and green forests,

and every moment of life was full of delight. They had everything they needed for happiness, and they were grateful for it.

One of the peoples of Beastoria, the angels, carried love and life throughout the universe. Angels are among the most magical of beings, able to carry souls to other stars and galaxies even before their birth out of a single love. Thus formed a great symbiosis, in which all creatures lived together in peace and harmony.

Fairies were among those creatures — beautiful, tiny beings full of kindness, wisdom, light, and love. They held the power to grant wishes. This is what made them special and set them apart from all other beings in the universe.

Fairies were like beautiful butterflies with wise hearts and bright minds. They were, as a rule, small, but came in every shape and size. One thing united them all — the splendor of their delicate wings.

Most beings in the universe who knew of the fairies longed for their wings. And how could they not? They were unbelievably beautiful. Most fairies had four wings of different colors, but some had as many as eight.

Every pair of wings held within it a layer of magic, and the more wings a fairy had, the more power she held to grant wishes — and wishes of ever greater complexity. This made the eight-winged fairies among the most powerful magical beings in the entire universe. Some whispered that they even flew among the angels.

The power of their wings lay in the fact that their hearts beat within the wings themselves. On the wings was inscribed a secret language of signs and words. These words were woven into wondrous colors of light. Fairies could write in the fairy language on anything at all. Words created truth, and colors created power. All of this was born from love, forged in words, from which the language of the original feeling itself was formed.

If you looked long enough at the wings, colors would appear, but the moment you looked away, the colors would instantly fade. Herein lay their secret. The colors held power, and every creature possessed its own magical power according to its own color, which remained hidden until the magical being exercised its power. Looking at them, one could glimpse signs of love, but upon looking away, one forgot everything. Only the memory of the feeling remained. And this feeling made every creature love the fairies even more. In one way or another, the fairies held a special place among the stars, in the magical heart of the world. The feeling whispered of love to the fairies, born from the energy of Beastoria’s sun. This galaxy shone like the very stars themselves.

Life and love spread ever further, the feeling flowed across the whole of the Universe and came to rest at the Andromeda galaxy, giving rise to life there as well.

On the map, this is the galaxy that lies above ours, to the right. It is marked as the darkest.

At that very moment the feeling turned into overwhelming passion and desire. Desire gave birth to dragons and dinosaurs — beings of tremendous strength and power. On the day of their creation, desire staged such a magnificent fireworks display, because passion was so proud of these special creatures and believed they were the finest beings in the entire Universe.

The dragon delighted the creator with its strength and might.

The creator forged the dragon's soul from the elements of fire and gas. This was a greatness and a power such as had never existed before. In that age he was given the name Sherra. But no one ever knew his true name.

There is one thing worth remembering here for later: every creature in the universe has its own primary element — the substance its soul is forged from. For fairies, it is light. For dragons, it is fire and, as we will see later, sulfur. For humans, who would appear much later, it is hydrogen — the simplest element in the universe, and at the same time the hungriest for bonds. The element does not decide a creature's fate, but it poses a question that each must answer alone: what will you do with your power?

When some of the dragons discovered that fire could cause harm, that it was capable of destruction, they began turning that fire against all living creatures of Andromeda. Soon all of Andromeda fell under the dragons' rule. Many living beings feared the dragons and suffered under their strength and malice. This went on for a long time. In time, thousands of species of dinosaurs multiplied. Some of the dinosaurs were peaceful and lived in harmony with the world. Some wandered among the forests and trees, eating leaves. When the dinosaurs ate these leaves, the power of the words in the language inscribed on the leaves filled them with positive energy. This bound them to the great balance forged by the Great Feeling.

Questions for self-reflection

- Which element, do you think, lies at the root of your own character — and what do you choose to do with it?
- Is there a "desert" somewhere in your own life that you yourself have filled with feeling and meaning?

Chapter 2. The Fairies and the Dragon

All this evil was born from the energy of Andromeda's bright sun. There lived the king of the dragons — Draco. He was the strongest and most valiant of all the dragons. His hide and scales were harder than iron. The fire that burst from his belly was a cold blue flame — the brightest and most lethal of all fires.

That which was granted as a gift from the very wellspring of magic, forged by the Ancients, became a source of grief for all creatures. Life, wherever it existed among the stars of Andromeda and the universe, lived day after day in fear and trembling before the dragons.

In time the dragons grew ever lazier and more quarrelsome. Even their thirst for magic and power weakened. But even as they aged, even as their passion faded, they went on sowing fear in the hearts of all bright creatures, and of the indifferent ones too.

While all this was happening in Andromeda, something bright and beautiful was taking place far, far away, in Beastoria, the world of the fairies. The fairies had grown considerably in power and influence. They became a people of life and light, and carried the same to every creature of their galaxy. They learned to heal and to make everything around them bloom and shine through their power. Fairies could grant any wish and strove to help one another. They wanted to stop the dragon and change the world.

They learned that most of their power came from their words — the language of their hearts, born of the colored light of their wings. They thought this might help Draco understand the importance of goodness.

Unlike the dragons of Andromeda, the fairies understood that their life and their power were a gift, meant for doing good and enjoying life. They wanted nothing more. Year after year the fairies wanted ever more urgently to free themselves and the whole world from these monsters. But their kin still remained captive to the dragons, hidden deep in the bowels of Andromeda. Soon Draco's madness began to spread. He resolved to extend the dragons' rule beyond Andromeda, to other galaxies and planets. For him the whole world came down to fire — and nothing else. News of the dragons and their reign of terror began to spread to other galaxies and planets. The mere mention of dragons made every living creature on every planet shudder with fear. Draco's desire to enslave still more fairies to fulfill his foolish whims reached Beastoria, the fairies' home planet. Frien, the king of the fairies, decided to send three of his finest fairies to Andromeda — to see whether any hope remained of saving that planet and all its inhabitants from the dragons' reign of terror.

Three fairies — Gloria, Bianca, and Charmina — passed through all seven portals of time and space to reach Andromeda, the world of the dragons. On

the map, the fairies flew from the right edge of the universe to the left, to reach Andromeda.

Charmina spread all eight of her wings. In that same instant the brightest, most dazzling colors flashed in every direction. The fairies crossed through space and entered the bounds of Andromeda, resolving to go straight to Draco — to bring him a good culture, to change his temper, or to make peace with him.

The dragon did not understand them, but he recognized their innocence and their wish to do good. There, in his domain, his sorcery ruled. Draco demanded that the fairies fulfill many wishes. Once he demanded a feast so delicious it would never end. Another time he wished for a mountain of silver coins that would stretch all the way to the neighboring planet.

He even grew tired of his own wishes. Often he forgot what he had wished for before he could even say it aloud, distracted by some new wish. It was in such moments that he enslaved ever more fairies. He chained them and sometimes forgot about their existence entirely. Every time he prepared to voice a new wish, many fairies tried to flee, knowing he would forget them and send them to the dungeon.

The fairies saw that the dragons sowed disorder and chaos everywhere, and did not know how to fix it all. Their anger sprang from foolish wishes and petty ignorance. It seemed impossible to teach the dragons anything new. The fairies tried to guide the dragons, to teach them the ways of goodness. But every time they failed. The dragons only used the fairies' kindness against them, wishing for one evil after another and enslaving the fairies. The dragons wished for ever more wishes, forcing the fairies to fulfill their every whim. And there were many whims. Time passed, and the fairies grew ever wearier. They wanted to free themselves and the whole world from these monsters. But their kin still remained captive to the dragons, hidden deep in the bowels of Andromeda. They sent many fairies to help the captives, but ever more fairies fell captive in turn. And Draco went on wishing for ever more foolishness. Draco loved shiny things. He considered them special, though he did not understand why. Perhaps his love of shine came from the fact that he himself had been made of light and desire. The chief element of his soul was sulfur — a kind possessed by no one else. This is why, when he breathed, he produced fire.

For three years by the fairies' reckoning, all three fairies spoke with thousands of dragons. And each time the outcome was the same. By the end of the conversation the dragon would fly into a rage and demand that they leave.

When other fairies learned of their troubles, they flew to help. But it was all in vain.

However young, however lonely, or however docile a dragon might seem at first, Gloria, Bianca, and Charmina were never able to help him. Having despaired of the other dragons, they came to believe that the only remaining path was to persuade Draco himself to change. For all the dragons' magic flowed from his power. And from that same power flowed both his petty hunger for absurd wishes and his drive to enslave the fairies.

But the fairies could still grant wishes and desires. They hoped this might help change the dragons' impulses. If they could grant enough wishes, perhaps his heart would change. Perhaps Draco would come to see compassion in the hearts of the fairies and other magical creatures. "We must persuade Draco," said Bianca. Bianca had only four wings. Her magic paled beside the power of Gloria and Charmina, but her eyes were beautiful.

Draco knew he could not trust the fairies, and went on demanding things they could not give him, or things that made no sense at all. Often Draco himself could not explain his wishes, because they were senseless. The fairies tried to understand him, but he grew angry and impatient. When they tried to explain that they did not understand him, Draco only shouted at them and chained them.

"I want to possess the hearts and minds of all magical creatures," Draco answered.

"Forgive me, but that is a wish I cannot grant either. It is not within my power, nor within the power of any fairy, angel, or other magical creature I know of. Is there something else I might grant you?" Gloria answered.

"And where does the limit of your power lie?" Draco asked.

"My power is bounded by the good that exists in the universe. The more good there is, the more power I have. When good fades, my power fades with it. I cannot give you power over the minds of other creatures, for there is no good in that. And were it granted, good itself would cease to exist entirely. Magic itself understands this, and so any attempt to grant such a wish would be in vain," Gloria answered.

"And you?" he asked, turning to Charmina.

"Fairy magic is very strong. We can grant many wishes. But like Gloria, my power is bounded by the good that exists in the universe. There is a great deal of good, if only one wishes to see it. We have tried to help you. But if you want more power — the secret to gaining more power is to take on more responsibility for other creatures. I can give you exactly as much power as you are willing to accept responsibility," she said. "Very well. I understand. I must find goodness and responsibility. I promise you I will find them. I will attain boundless goodness and boundless responsibility.

And what will you give me in return?” Draco pondered her words as Charmina’s wings trembled.

“What is it you seek?”

(New scene) Draco was silent for a long while. In that silence, had any of the fairies known how to read through the blue flame of his breath, they might have made out not anger, but something quieter and older than anger — the weariness of a creature who has spent too long as the only adult among those who fear him. “Responsibility,” he said at last, as if tasting the word like an unfamiliar metal. “You speak of it as though it could be taken like a mountain of gold. But I have wished for gold a thousand times already, and it changed nothing in me. What if I take on responsibility — and nothing changes inside me even so? What would be left to wish for then?” He said this not as a threat but almost as a question to himself, and for a moment the three fairies saw not the king of dragons, but something far lonelier.

But the moment passed, and old habit proved stronger. He asked that the fairies chain all the fairies. The fairies were stunned. They refused to grant this wish. He asked them why they thought he wanted to enslave all the fairies, and they answered — because he was angry. He agreed, and admitted that he was indeed angry.

Charmina’s wings trembled, not knowing what to think or do. Bianca looked frightened. Her eyelids fluttered often as she hovered just above Draco’s eyes.

All three fairies together were smaller than one of Draco’s nostrils, and he himself was far larger than an ordinary dragon. They looked like tiny flies, but used the magic of their wings to appear larger, more visible, as they spoke. Then Draco wished for a mountain of gold. This made no sense at all, since he had already wished for many mountains of gold before. He did this so often that he constantly forgot and wished for the same thing again. Sometimes he wished for mountains of gold that were gold but appeared in different colors. Sometimes he wished for invisible gold. Sometimes he wished for absurd tricks. He liked to play jokes on other dragons. If a joke failed, he wished for some fairy to help him think of a better one. Once he wished for Charmina to play a trick on all the fairies.

Then Draco remembered a book of tricks. He wanted Charmina to make a book of tricks appear, so he could torment all the fairies and every other creature in every world of every galaxy with it. “I am trying, but no such book exists,” Charmina said in her gentle fairy voice. “All I mean to say is: no matter how many times I beat my wings, this book does not appear. And that can mean only one thing — either there is no good in your request, or the story itself does not exist.”

Draco flew into a rage. Red flame engulfed everything around him. Charmina created a small pocket bubble of space-time to shelter everyone from Draco's fury.

"Can that really be true?" Bianca asked Charmina.

"I have never heard of any such book of tricks — not from the angels, nor the elves, nor from the great Book of Witches, nor from the Ancestors of Beastoria."

"Then what shall we do? Perhaps we can find out somehow?" said Bianca.

"I think we should listen to Draco. Perhaps if we grant enough of his wishes, a seed of goodness will take root in his heart," said Gloria. "I think you might be right. Let us listen to Draco. If we listen to him, perhaps he will see that we want to help him, that we want the world of dragons to become as good as the world of fairies." Bianca smiled, believing this must be so.

They all agreed, and a moment later began listening closely to what Draco wished to say.

More and more often, Draco compelled them to grant his every wish. Draco took what Charmina said from a pure heart and devised cunning ways to find good in his every wish. He made his wishes small enough and absurd enough to slip past the fairies' limits, and the fairies failed to notice what limits and boundaries might arise if all his wishes were added together.

But he still never understood why he kept wishing for more. He only grew angry and thought it was probably not a bad idea.

He treated the fairies like slaves, and their kindness and gentleness kept them from seeing the true cunning of his satanic heart.

The stronger, more envious, and more malicious the dragons became, the more fiercely they hunted for magic. If they could not absorb someone else's magic, they tried to lure it away through deceit. And if deceit failed, they waited until they found a way to steal it.

In time even hope faded from their hearts. And yet, through all this time, their kindness and naive wish to change the hearts of Draco and the other dragons kept them from seeing the obvious: Draco would never change. This was an outcome they could not have foreseen. Such was the limit of their own goodness.

But one day, far in the future, an angel appeared to Gloria. The angel's name was Michael.

"I find not one drop of goodness in Draco. He is selfish as hell itself, as are all the dragons under his rule." "That cannot be. Can it really be true?" Bianca asked.

“I fear it is true,” Michael answered.

“There are many forms of magic. But the nature of magic itself does not allow any creature to grow too powerful. Every time some being grew too strong, the universal force, the Great Feeling, would strike that being down and strip away its power, scattering it across the whole universe.”

Once the fairies were convinced that the evil dragon could not be healed by kindness, they revealed everything to their elder fairies and turned to their king, Frien, for help.

Questions for self-reflection

- Have you met your own “Draco” in life — someone whose darkness you hoped kindness alone could heal? What came of it?
- Where, for you, is the line between patience and enabling someone else’s cruelty?

Next: Part II. The Age of Reckoning — “Apocalypse” and “Out of Chaos.” It is here, in “Apocalypse,” that the arc of Draco’s story reaches its end — that very “single act that was an act of love” mentioned above, which is worth reading in full, rather than in summary.

PART II. THE AGE OF RECKONING

The symbiosis described in Part I was not eternal by its nature — it was eternal only until a being appeared who wanted more than was his due. Draco became the first such being. His story is not simply a myth of good triumphing over evil. It is a story of how kindness with no limits can itself become a weapon against those who show it: the fairies very nearly paid with their lives for believing, for too long, that evil could be talked out of itself.

Out of the ruins of Andromeda will be born not emptiness, but a new question — the very one the elements were already asking in Part I: what to do with your power. The answer will now be attempted not by dragons and fairies, but by the first humans.

Chapter 3. Apocalypse

For three years running, the three brave fairies labored without rest to make the Andromeda galaxy better — day after day. All this was possible thanks to Frien, the king of the fairies. He was the most beautiful of all creatures one might ever meet — full of light and life. He had unlocked the

boundless power of light that lies within every fairy, and resolved to direct it toward the good of all whom it could help.

But this power was boundless only when it served good. Otherwise it could not be harnessed, and so the fairies could not grant Draco's more elaborate and treacherous wishes. They could only grant those wishes that helped do good.

Soon Draco understood that the fairies could not give him what he needed. They could not open the ancient worlds to him. They could not grant wishes that would bring about their own destruction. Soon he grew tired of them.

(Bridge to the previous chapter) That brief moment of doubt that had flickered in him when he spoke with Charmina — the question, "What if nothing changes inside me even so?" — had found no answer. Draco did not know how to live with a question for which he had no wish ready to answer. And so, instead of seeking responsibility, he demanded once more the thing he knew best how to demand — power.

Draco kept several magical creatures locked away, bound in magical chains in dragon dungeons hidden behind the ancient stone Okfizius. Within this stone he held captive a great many magical beings — all those he had enslaved the moment he realized they could not give him what he wanted.

Frien, king of the fairies, passed through every dimension and portal of time, from the world of the fairies into the world of the dragons, to stop the dragons. Frien found the ancient stone Okfizius and freed all the magical creatures from their captivity.

Frien realized he did not have the strength to defeat Draco alone, and began calling for help, but no one answered. He went on calling for friendship and unity.

Near the Andromeda galaxy, in an oxygen galaxy shared by worms and chickens, there lived a magical people of worms. Their world had been attacked by the dinosaurs more than once, and they longed for change. This is why the worms agreed to help.

One of the worms, named Miyon, had lost many friends to Draco's hand. He despised the dragon.

"I know how to defeat them," Miyon said in the ancient language of the worms, understood only by Frien. "I despise him — he will die from a single glance of mine." A dark power lurked in Miyon's eyes.

"If I speak a certain spell, his own hatred will destroy him. But it will bring great danger upon us all," Frien answered.

“Yes, that is true. But it is the only way to keep him from destroying our worlds. Draco grows stronger with every year. If we do not stop him, the dragons of Andromeda will devour the whole universe.”

Frien’s heart grew heavy with grief. He had never killed anyone. There was darkness in such an act. And if there were even a drop of corruption in this deed, that darkness would spread through the hearts of the fairies and all of Beastoria. But if nothing was done to stop Draco, Beastoria would be devoured all the same.

Frien had to act, and he agreed with Miyon — together they spoke the spell. It drove the dragon mad.

“I cannot believe you dared to do this,” Draco said. “I promise, this will be your end. This will lead to… to…” Draco could not finish the sentence. The last remnants of his reason began to fade, but before they faded entirely, he made his final choice. Unwilling to admit defeat, the dragon took his own life, preserving an immortal love for the sake of a great posterity.

This single act was an act of love. The dragon’s sun exploded, and its fragments scattered across the whole universe. Stars began falling one after another. The dragons could not understand what was happening.

One of the dragons said that a falling star was a sign to make a wish. Any wish could be granted, if only one wished it upon a falling star. The dragons lined up, making wishes and watching the falling stars. Heaven and earth whirled in a dance. Despite all the evil that reigned in the dragons’ kingdom, goodness still continued to spread. It was an astonishing time.

The queen of the dragons, whose name was the name of the galaxy itself, was more beautiful than all the dragons. She wished to make a special wish. She flew apart from the line of dragons, to make her wish alone. And she wished for great love — and from the beauty of her eyes a million stars burst into being.

Draco loved her, though she could never understand this. Not one of the dragons could darken her heart, but soon her planet, too, became a falling star and was lost in time and space.

A few surviving lives endured among the wreckage of the stars.

We do not hear their MOANS and do not understand their PAIN.

They regretted having survived, and were deeply unhappy. The dragon’s sun in the end destroyed itself, finally ruining the last of the surviving dragons.

The heavens shook and went mad.

The great creature had died, and the stars collapsed. Andromeda became vast ruins. Those stars of Andromeda turned to cosmic dust. In the end the order of the heavenly bodies fell apart.

The kingdom of the dragons, where darkness hid its own light and its own history… Nothing could crush the dragon spirit — not the forces of good hidden in secret worlds, nor the forces of evil without. Great purpose had been given to the dragons by the creator, for they had been made from the primal elements and magic of the galaxy. This was a greatness and a power granted by the creator to the whole organic world.

Soon Draco’s spirit rose from the ashes of evil. Now, moving among angels, he became immune to death and possessed magic stronger than ever

before. His power grew by the day. But on his star there remained no life, no happiness — only unbroken darkness.

In time even the small crumb of goodness that had remained in that hidden world faded away. The evil and darkness of the dragons spread ever wider. The dragon spirit killed at will, at any moment. And worst of all, the balance of the stars throughout the universe had been lost because of the gaping void left in place of Andromeda.

Draco saw darkness endlessly in his own soul. He found no meaning in life. He liked to hide in the shadows and stalk bright souls.

All he wanted was to become the greatest once more, to make his father proud of him. But the outcome of all his efforts was only destruction and death.

He did indeed find pleasure in destruction and death, but it was only a way to distract himself from the emptiness hidden in his own heart. And that emptiness kept spreading further.

Draco infected one of the angels with his emptiness. And once the darkness entered that angel, it spread to others as well. When one angel is struck by evil, all the other angels suffer with him. But it was not only about one angel. Soon a third of the heavenly angels had joined him and the resurrected Draco — now a dragon-demon.

Dark phantoms of dragons multiplied wherever there was light, and wherever there was light, darkness now followed. Draco's spirit could see in the dark — and saw everything. He knew what his enemy wanted. He pursued his victims and could do whatever he pleased. Like shadows of the night, his dark angels flew side by side, following relentlessly after Frien and Miyon, leaving behind one madness after another, each time bringing life and death alike.

The light of Andromeda faded, the galaxy fell apart, shattering the heavens. The balance of the universe was disrupted as well. Chaos and destruction reigned in the heavens. And this soon came to pass — for evil always collapses under its own weight.

An entire eternity would not be enough to restore the stars. And who could heal this galaxy?! The fairies say that time heals, but the time of Andromeda itself had been broken too.

Questions for self-reflection

- Draco's death is called "an act of love." Do you agree — and why does the myth insist on precisely that word?
- What in you comes from destruction — not as a way to hurt others, but as a way to drown out your own emptiness?

Chapter 4. Out of Chaos

In every world, seen and unseen, a great upheaval took place. Pairs once inseparable were parted forever. Hearts once sincere began to lie. Bright minds began to fall for foolish tricks. And no one had the power to fix this — by any available means, by any reasonable explanation. The heart breaks when love is destroyed, for destroyed love turns to hatred — a perfect hatred that cannot be mended.

Life gives rise, in its active elements, to a powerful will to love, a desire not to be alone, to overcome any hardship to prove an invisible love. Beauty is the power of friends and lovers, which will reflect one's better half and fulfill one's dreams. The mind understands that a wish can be fulfilled, and that this is a pleasant feeling, and that it would be a shame not to share this feeling with others. And so the mind creates improved forms of life — and could not hide their dark side.

The dark side balances the light. There can be no good without evil, obviously. There can be no positive without negative. And finally, there can be no choice without good and evil, light and dark. Life is better arranged this way. In such a state, beings have the capacity to understand the necessity of choice, and along with it, the consequences of our decisions.

Every physical system has limits of stability and critical zones, upon entering which the system may collapse, change its properties and character, become something else. Within the range of what is possible, there may be an infinite number of ways events can unfold. And the higher mind could determine all the conditions and circumstances under which living beings live and die. For these creatures are part of the higher mind and an embodiment of its designs. So it was before the catastrophe.

What happens after death has always remained a mystery. Death is not as significant as life, for the spirit in the dead no longer lives; it is no longer troubled by desires and passions. It seeks new forms into which to be reborn. Since parents are bound to their children, the creator, too, is bound up in the course of life's events, and expresses this through the feelings people experience when someone is born or dies.

(Expanded birth scene) And so, in this chaos left behind by the fall of Andromeda — where the element of fire had burned itself out, and the element of light had withdrawn to its farthest reaches — a third element was born, the youngest and hungriest for bonds in the whole universe. A tiny particle of light and water saw everything around it. It saw how others lived, and how everyone strove for something, though it did not always work out for them. And this particle thought to itself that it, too, wanted to live, wanted to rejoice, as others did. It felt this so strongly that the whole

universe heard it. This was the element hydrogen — the simplest atom in the world, made of a single proton and a single electron, and therefore doomed forever to seek a partner in order to become something whole. Just as sulfur was the element of Draco's desire, and light was the element of the fairies' self-denial, hydrogen became the element of longing: a longing for another, without which it could not become anything complete. It is this longing, and not any ready-made answer, that would become the chief inheritance hydrogen would pass on to its children — Adam and Eve.

The rays of the sun carried the particle of water to the very edge of the galaxy, to the place where the light of seven surrounding galaxies crossed. This place is called paradise. No source of light is visible there, yet light surrounds everything, everywhere. It is there that the soul finds peace when we die. We could spend hundreds of earthly years there and not feel it was enough. It is a place of unceasing bliss and perfection. In paradise this particle felt at home. The particle of water had a second half — like drops of water, they resembled one another, yet were made of different sexes. In paradise, where they were named Adam and Eve, they spent a long time together.

The spirit of paradise taught them to play together and to be friends. One of their games was "warm-cold"; they played hide-and-seek. Drawing near to one another, they felt warmth, and drawing apart, coolness, and it was always a joy to find a friend. The spirit of paradise told them they must live and love one another. The world, he said, is better than war. He told them they must find a friend — that special one with whom all secrets could be shared. They found angels, nymphs, and other inhabitants of paradise. Most of them liked finding one another. The spirit of paradise taught them the meaning of life and what one must do to take the best from it.

Their lives were woven into a single soul. Adam and Eve felt their hearts fuse and bind together. They flew above fields of cloud to see the vastness of creation. Their eyes could not fully take in the beauty of all they spoke of to one another. Adam took Eve with him to the very edge of the world, encouraging her to test her wings at that height. Before long she learned to fly.

Eve's mysterious form meant nothing to Adam. He felt her soul and held her in his arms, trying to show her distant birds. Eve laughed in reply, trying to find joy in what they did. They were the first to know love, and so every lesson, every feeling, took its origin in their experience.

Boundless peace reigned there; they had everything one could wish for. Their hearts were pure and golden. There was not one speck of darkness in them. In paradise they gave no thought to any rules, and I think this is precisely what made that place what it was — a border with no rules. There, one could not even tell when one had broken any law. Adam and Eve met many angels in paradise. Some of the angels played with them, but some

watched them in secret the whole time. They thought Eve too beautiful to belong to one man alone. These angels had been made of fire, and it was almost impossible for them to resist particles of water. One of the angels confessed that he was in love with these heavenly inhabitants.

In paradise all remained just as beautiful, but time did not stand still. The stars completed their circuits, and once more the twenty-first cycle of the Moon arrived. The higher powers decided that Adam and Eve were ready for a new life; they needed to be moved to Earth. For this, the rays of the suns of every galaxy gathered in the form of apples on a tree, to offer them protection. This tree glowed brighter than anything else in paradise.

Adam and Eve liked the tree, and wanted to play near it always. But the spirit of paradise warned them that this tree was special, and that tasting its fruit would forever change their existence. They trusted the spirit and tried to speak as little as possible about the apples on that tree.

The tree held its own power to tempt, but Adam skillfully avoided its snares. He found things to occupy himself with each day, to keep himself busy. Eve sometimes joined him, to share the best moments of these occupations with him. They kept the image of the tree in their minds and did not wish to go near it. Adam directed all his thoughts to his wife, Eve, if only to distract himself from the tree.

They were told that the tree could make them regret their very existence. If they tasted its fruit, they would die, and everything around them would change with them. The world would fall to ruin; sickness and war would come.

Adam could not even imagine what it meant to feel pain. He knew only good and knew nothing of evil, and so, if anything was to keep him faithful, it could only be love of the good. But sometimes fear of evil, too, is needed to keep one on the righteous path.

The solar serpent wished to hasten the course of events. He saw no reason to wait any longer and descended to Adam, trying to persuade him to obey the laws that sustain the earth. The cosmic serpent knew that much would depend on whether Adam obeyed the law, and so sought to reveal that law to him. Eve approached the serpent, and he offered her an apple. All the apples were fine, but, looking closer, she sensed differences in size, hue, and perhaps even juiciness. Eve made her choice, and Adam performed his famous act. He took Eve’s favorite apple for her, and the world around him began to change.

Adam began searching among the angels and inhabitants of paradise who might help him carry out his plans. Adam and Eve had eleven angels in paradise, and one who would guide him through his life on earth, sustaining his existence.

Everyone in paradise loved them both and could hardly look away from them, especially one angel. That angel's name was Iblis. Iblis had been made of pure fire. He did not like that Adam and Eve had claimed all the attention of paradise's inhabitants, drawing it away from himself. This angel wanted the attention to be shared with him as well.

Iblis already held considerable influence in paradise, and he considered using that influence to strip Adam of all his glory. He watched Adam,

watched everything Adam might accomplish. He noticed that Adam, too, had been made with certain special abilities. Iblis wanted to surpass Adam in everything.

The creator decided to reincarnate this angel and send him to the stars along with Adam's family. He took away the wings the angel had once had, and the angel could no longer create as much as before.

The creator decided to reincarnate Adam and Eve on Earth, the third star of the solar system. Earth was to become the most suitable place for Adam and Eve to live, and so he used earthly clay to reincarnate him.

Part of the clay was taken to create the man; he also took part of the plants. The creator pressed a little juice from the plants for the man and filled the man with this moisture. And he made sure the man had enough of a plant's nature in him to understand the world around him well.

As soon as he finished creating the man, he set about creating the woman, Eve. Eve took far longer, because the creator decided to perfect a great many traits. He added a womb; he added extra muscle to certain parts of the body.

Standing, she was almost an exact match for Adam. And so Adam felt ever more drawn to Eve, preferring her company even to the company of the creator himself.

On the day of their creation, all the inhabitants of paradise gathered to witness the appearance of the new creature. Adam was created first. He took on a form no one in the heavens had ever seen. The creator made him visible to all.

The creator had a design to make them beings of the universe; he wanted them to live in the real world and to be able to reach the stars around them. Thus the humanoid form was created, and the creator settled Adam and Eve on different stars of the solar system, granting each their own fate.

The creator created the people of the green world on the star called Saturn, the sixth star of the solar system. They were made from the leaves of a tree. In their world nothing is impossible. Wondrous peace and harmony reign there throughout life. They are very down-to-earth, yet even the most impossible dreams can come true, thanks to the way they think. Those who live in the green world of the golden star Saturn are able to heal mind and body.

And so, if any part of the body is injured, the inhabitants of the green world can use any plant to heal the injured place.

Therefore he endowed the plants with healing power to help heal the body; and through the angel of wisdom, Eve was shown what to do with every

plant around her. God made this possible, for he knew that at times their bodies might suffer harm for one reason or another.

The creator gathered them into clouds in the sky on the star people call Neptune, the eighth star of the solar system. Those who live in the sky can fly and go a long time without touching the ground. They play a great deal and live in a wondrous world. They tried falling to the ground as though it were the most thrilling adventure in the world.

They play without ceasing, and sometimes descend to the ground and interact with humans. Sometimes people cannot hear their language when they speak, but see them in dreams. Humans gain a connection to heavenly bodies and make use of what they learned upon waking. All thanks to their supernatural gift for hypnosis. Cloud people are very strong of mind and see straight through to the bone. And yet they can be very kind and welcoming.

Taken as a whole, the people on Earth and the people in the clouds are very much alike, but the conditions of their lives are entirely different, and they are close only in feeling. The spans of time are so vast that the length of their lives cannot be compared. People on Earth believe that the heavens will restore justice and establish the order that Earth so often lacks. They look to the sky, make a wish, and hope the heavens will hear them.

Many of Adam and Eve’s descendants came to lack these basic things, and wished for answers from the creator. The only way to make such a request was through the desire to pray. There were also times when some of Adam and Eve’s descendants were oppressed and punished unjustly. Their only hope for justice was that the creator would punish their oppressors, and this request could be voiced only in prayer.

This hope usually took the form of prayers, and many, it was believed, turned their wishes to the sky. The sky was the direction in which paradise lay. Some learned to pray standing, others kneeling, waiting for the creator to answer their pleas. There was much to ask for: good health, food, water, and clothing.

Adam and Eve never knew that particles of their souls lived on other stars, but always longed to be closer to one another.

In truth, on Earth it was almost impossible for them to find one another.

Because when the soul wishes to love, the body does not know how to do it properly. Because the body does not always know the love the soul longs for. The soul soars into the sky, but the body remains on earth. Perhaps because the soul only partly awakens the psyche and the mind. If we could awaken the soul more fully, it would lead us exactly where we long to go.

Questions for self-reflection

- Hydrogen is named here the element of longing — an eternal search for a partner. Do you recognize anything of yourself in this: longing as a source of strength, or as a source of vulnerability?
- Iblis wanted the attention shared with him too. Is this feeling familiar to you — and how do you deal with it without letting it turn into destruction?

Next: Part III. The Age of Humankind — where the element of hydrogen, the longing of Adam and Eve for one another, will collide for the first time with two different notions of what love is: exchange, or labor.

PART III. THE AGE OF HUMANKIND

The elements made their choice for the fairies and the dragons before those beings ever learned to speak. Humans are different: hydrogen — the element of longing, not of a ready-made answer — leaves Adam and Eve a space for choice that no one before them ever had. This is why the story of humankind is no longer the story of a single force meeting the world, but the story of two different answers to the same question: what is love. Adam looks for exchange in it. Eve looks for labor. This book will not presume to say which of them is right.

Chapter 5. Adam and Eve Build a Family

They fell in love with each other on the very first day — the first day of creation. Adam could not take his eyes off Eve and hardly ever left her side. He thought of nothing, remembered nothing, but the two of them. They spoke little, but understood one another without words. In the forest where they lived there was much timber and life. Finding food cost them no effort at all. The forest was so beautiful and full of wonders that they did not miss the paradise they had lost.

The angels watched Adam and his wife from above; Adam held Eve, and together they watched the waves of the ocean. They sat beneath a tree and spoke of the loud sound they had heard that morning — the fall of a meteor and a fallen angel to the earth.

Adam held Eve and whispered a few words in her ear. They laughed. Eve laid her head on his chest, trying to imitate the movements of the birds they had seen in the forest the day before. Adam and Eve marveled at life on earth, and so every beast of the earth and every other creature submitted to their will.

They came to know each other under the moon. The Moon moves around us in its own cycle. Every day of this period is counted as its own phase and bears a number in accordance with the influence of the other stars of the universe. The length of its orbit is marked by the stars. It was the first week of the lunar month when Adam and Eve joined in love and conceived their first child. For Adam all of this was new, and in the dim light of the moon he first knew that beautiful feeling the creator had granted him and his wife Eve.

Longing to know his wife's body, Adam often bent his head to her breast, trying to feel her with his whole being. He touched her with his hands, caressing her, finding comfort in it. Eve found this pleasant too, and, returning after a busy day, she would seek out exactly this tender touch from Adam.

Adam never missed a chance to caress his wife Eve. One night he drew close to her — both of them, of course, were without clothing.

He brushed her breast with his lips without meaning to, and felt Eve relax, arching backward in a languid curve. This meant something stirring. He embraced her, helping her down onto the windswept shore by the sea itself. His hand slid along her hip. She trembled, not yet understanding what she felt, and within a few moments of gentle touch their bodies joined. She opened to him and, with a moan — pain and rapture at once — received him. So passed their first night of love — simple, brief, and full of new discoveries.

This time Eve did not reach the peak of pleasure fully. Without quite noticing it, she sought it again and again with her hands. Once she took Adam's hand and placed it on her hip, showing him what she wanted. He found this pleasant too.

After a time, Eve's belly began to grow, and they wondered with surprise and puzzlement why it was becoming so large. Adam was overjoyed when a son was born to him. He was born seventh in the count under the moon; this was Frien, the one who would later defeat the dragon. He was that great fairy wizard who overcame the dragon through cunning. Adam and Eve rejoiced as their family grew. They went on having children, coming to know one another in every possible way.

Eve was still new to all of this. She scarcely understood what to do with the infant who had appeared to her. On instinct she brought his crying mouth to her breast. Adam noticed how the baby grew happier the more he nursed at his mother's breast.

Before long this occupation caught his attention too. Later, while the infant slept, he would come to Eve, touch his lips to her breast, and try to nurse. Finding the taste of the milk not to his liking, he never repeated it.

Eve made sure the child received her milk morning, noon, and evening. The child grew and grew, until at last he began refusing his mother’s milk — and this became a new lesson for Eve. Her child might cry from morning until noon, seeking something to satisfy his hunger.

Eve took the child with her as she and Adam made their rounds of their domain. The child watched them tend to sick animals and broken trees. Before long she began to crave solid food. The moment she saw Eve eating, she reached for it with her little hands. This is how Eve learned that a mother’s milk was meant only for the very smallest.

Later, sons and daughters were born to them, to whom they gave beautiful and charming names. Over seven years, three sons and three daughters were born. Adam and Eve’s daughters were like stars.

The eldest daughter was like the sky over the earth — vast and bright as a cloud. In her was light from the world of the elephants. A particle of the second daughter belonged to the star called Jupiter. She was a plump girl, gentle and clever. The youngest daughter was a special gift — the very gift that Adam and Eve had managed to carry out of paradise itself. A particle of her soul was hidden within that very apple Eve had so loved. She was born fourteenth.

The middle son was the worm who took part in the dragon’s defeat. He was born sixteenth; it was the worm known as Sixteenth who played his part in the plot against the dragon.

The youngest son was their late child, born in the last phase of the moon, twenty-eighth in the count. In him was light from the world of the turtles. Twenty-Eighth was kind and clever, carrying the energy of Mars itself, always ready to help Adam with anything. They spent long hours talking of the stars and of life.

The children of Adam and Eve were great personalities, though they themselves did not know it. The children of Adam and Eve were always destined to play an important role in history and to change the world. In their later lives they would become prophets and fathers of nations, proudly bearing the names of their forebears.

Sadly, not all the children of Adam and Eve survived, and this became a grief for their whole family. Once winter came, and it grew hard for Adam to find food. During a hunt, in a dispute over precedence, the middle son killed the eldest. They had always been friends, and he grieved bitterly over the loss of his best friend, but he could not restrain his strength or his feelings. It happened without intent, and the middle son mourned it forever after. The death of the seventh brother, by his own hand, remained a wound he never fully healed.

Adam, Eve, and their whole family were born again. Their spirits are immortal, for they are part of the universe. They sought from the almighty a new reprieve for life. Rebirth is like breath. A breath as vast as the universe itself. All living things breathe. To bring to life again is to grant breath. They breathe — and so they have a soul. Breath is directly connected to consciousness and nourishes the mind with knowledge. It also illuminates the mind, processing what comes from outside. These are the accompanying responses within — the repetition of tried paths, or the birth of new designs. In sleep, breath slows. It is through breath that spirits fall from paradise to Earth and are born again. Spirits have neither past nor future, for time does not age them. Only pure love has the power to touch the soul and change the world.

When pretense ends and the world falls asleep, shadows of darkness pursue an exhausted Frien with every rebirth, bringing fatal misfortune. They bring war and grief. In darkness these shadows fly side by side, leaving madness behind them on the earth, and losing themselves in the murk of time. No one has ever seen their faces. They have neither future nor past. For souls do not change, until within us there forms that love which God himself longs for.

When Adam decided their children had grown and it was time to pair them off, he reasoned that they would need some way to carry on their line, and that pairing the children would allow them to grow close and, in time, build families of their own. Eve worried for her daughters: she knew that her sons, still without any experience in love, might easily lack the skill and sensitivity required. From her own experience with Adam she knew that it was often easier for a man to find pleasure than for a woman, and she feared that a son, thinking only of himself, might leave his sisters unhappy. Eve did not want her daughters' first experience to be difficult or bitter, and decided to instruct a son herself in how to be an attentive and caring husband.

(New dialogue) She came to Adam with this request — but only after searching a long while for the right words.

"I need to speak with Sixteenth, before he shares his life with his sisters," she said. "He must understand that intimacy is not something one takes, but something one gives."

"Gives?" Adam repeated, and genuine bewilderment sounded in his voice. "Eve, everything in this world is an exchange. I give warmth — you give food. I protect the home — you keep the hearth. Our children will receive the same: a husband gives protection and a name; a wife gives children and comfort. Is this not how life itself is arranged, the life we see all around us: beast gives beast its prey, tree gives fruit in exchange for care?"

“The life around us — yes. But not love,” Eve answered. “If Sixteenth goes to his sister believing he will receive something in exchange for what he gives, he will always be counting. And where there is counting, sooner or later someone is left in debt, and that becomes poison. I want him to understand: beside another person, one does not bargain — one labors. One notices what the other needs before they ask. That is not the same as an exchange, Adam. An exchange ends once both sides have gotten what they wanted. But the labor of love never ends — and that is exactly why life is in it.”

Adam was silent a long while before answering. “You speak of labor as though all the joy were in it. But I want my son to have what I have — what I feel when I come to you. Was that so wrong?”

“It was not wrong,” Eve said, more gently. “But you remember it as something given to you. I want our son to remember it as something he did for another. That is the whole difference between us, Adam. You believe love is what is fairly divided. I believe it is alive only for as long as someone gives more than they owe.”

In the end, after a long conversation, Eve convinced him that this would be best for everyone. Adam allowed Eve to instruct their son. Eve called Sixteenth to her, to teach him this lesson.

Sixteenth was bewildered, not understanding why his mother was calling him for such a conversation, though he sensed only care in her words. He instinctively looked for his father, unsure how he ought to behave, but Eve gently reassured him and persuaded him to trust her instruction. What passed between mother and son in that hour remained their secret — she spoke to him of patience, of tenderness and care, of the very things she wished for her daughters from their future husbands. She taught him that true intimacy is above all attentiveness to the other, not to oneself. When the lesson drew to a close, she embraced him fondly, told him he had understood everything correctly, and explained in detail what he ought to remember when the time came to share his life with his sisters. Sixteenth left her a different man — he carried away with him both new knowledge and a new sense of responsibility.

Adam watched them in secret, and what he saw did not sit well with him. He felt jealousy and anger, though he himself did not understand why. It seemed to Adam that his wife should not be having such a conversation with their son. He could not even recall why he had once agreed to it; he heard in Eve’s voice a tenderness he could not remember in their own intimacy, and this made him feel strangely inadequate. He blamed himself for these feelings, but could not quiet them.

He found himself thinking there had been another way to teach his son what was needed — for instance, to call Sixteenth as a witness to Adam and Eve’s

own intimacy, rather than having Eve herself become his example and instructor. At least then everything would have been clear to everyone, unlike what Adam felt Sixteenth was now learning — only half the truth. He kept this grievance in his heart and watched everything in silence to the very end.

Meanwhile the youngest daughter was hungry; she called for her mother and inadvertently glimpsed part of what was passing between Eve and her brother. When the lesson ended, Eve dismissed her son, but Sixteenth wished to continue the instruction and asked his mother for advice again. Adam's jealousy finally broke loose; this time he would not let them continue. He entered the room before Eve could answer her son, and in anger ordered Sixteenth to leave her.

The youngest daughter saw only that her parents were angry with one another, and in their quarrel had even forgotten to feed her. It grieved her how completely they had lost themselves in their own dispute, as though she did not exist at all. No one brought her food, and her body grew weaker day by day. She lost all joy in life and love, and at last simply fell — and did not rise again. When Adam saw that his youngest daughter was dead, his grief knew no bounds. He held her and wept, struck by the unbearable thought that his own carelessness had cost him yet another child — that if he had only been more attentive to his daughter, he would not now be holding her lifeless body. And so that her body would not fall to wild beasts, he buried her himself.

Over the years Adam grew afraid of himself — he feared he might attack his family or bring them harm. After the loss of his daughter, Adam sank into madness and felt that his very presence near his family carried danger.

While Eve strove to spend more time with the children, teaching them everything she believed they would need to build their own lives and families, Adam withdrew from them further and further. He grew irritable, flying into anger at the slightest provocation, so quickly that the children learned to keep their distance, lest they fall under his heavy hand. He no longer cared for their wellbeing, and could least of all bear the sight of Sixteenth. For a long while Eve tried not to notice the change in his temper, explaining it away as grief over their lost daughter, but in time she grew tired of making excuses for Adam before the children, and began keeping her own distance from him. A general unease settled over their household, and it weighed heavily on their relationship. Eve noticed more than once how Adam scolded Sixteenth, and so often that the young man became a shadow of himself. It seemed to her that his anger toward their son sprang from that very lesson in intimacy she had once given Sixteenth, and she felt guilty — not for the lesson itself, but because their son now had to bear his father's anger on account of it. And she resolved to speak with Adam openly. Their conversation proved a hard one: Adam accused her of

spending time with the children at his and their relationship's expense, while Eve accused him of giving the children far too little attention himself. She did not believe the loss of their youngest daughter should have broken him so completely that he stopped caring even for the children who remained alive. She begged him to forgive Sixteenth and pleaded with Adam to stop endlessly reproaching the young man. For it had been entrusted to the two of them, together, to raise their children, to watch over their growth, to teach them to love and to be loved. Adam had failed in this duty, for he had let his own feelings stand in the way of what mattered most. In the end they reached an impasse: Adam refused to let go of his groundless anger at Sixteenth, and Eve stood firm that she would not let him torment their children any longer. The days after that conversation were hard and uneasy. Eve gave up all attempts to reach Adam or to understand him, and turned all her care toward the children. She stopped sleeping beside him, choosing instead to seek her rest where the children slept. Adam became an exile in his own family. He could no longer live with them — and the more they avoided him, the more clearly he understood everything that was happening. Love and grief drove them apart. Adam became too dangerous. He could no longer remain near his family. He feared he might cause them harm. What was the point of being a father if he could not protect his family? And so he left his loved ones, but the gods granted him immortality and named him the devil. He tried to die alone, but could not die. Adam became immortal and now existed on the border between life and death. Adam and Eve found themselves in different worlds.

Their relationship reached the point where both understood: separation was inevitable. They had both been waiting for it.

Adam liked to think that he alone bore the whole weight of guilt, but Eve blamed herself for the tragedy too — though, unlike Adam, she did not let the pain swallow her whole. She spent time alone with her thoughts, telling herself all would be well. On some days she wept, on others she felt a little better; she tried to persuade Adam to share these reflections with her, but he was not ready for it, and in time she gave up trying. She knew they would never fully recover from this loss — with that she could make peace, but Adam could accept nothing at all, and this was the chief obstacle between them — the one he himself never acknowledged. And so, without quite realizing it, they were both preparing themselves for the inevitable.

Their children married their sisters and settled in the forest, at a great distance from one another. Twenty-Eighth found his best friend in his eldest sister. He liked speaking with her, because she seemed to be the only one who wanted to listen to him. Too often he got lost in the noise raised by his other brothers and sisters, easily swallowed up in the commotion — but his eldest sister always noticed him. They could sit together for hours and laugh, and she constantly encouraged him to learn new things, and sometimes accompanied him on hunts, and it never mattered whether he

returned with a catch or merely a slain beast — she always had words of support for him. They had much in common; he made an arrow from the stem of a plant, and showed it to no one but her. Sometimes they spoke of their other brothers and sisters, especially when one of them upset Twenty-Eighth. They would go down to the stream, and he would tell her everything, as they listened to the birds and the music of the water. With no one else could Twenty-Eighth find such closeness, and so, when their parents gathered them all and announced they must part, he did not have to search long for his eldest sister. He was drawn to her naturally, and she to him.

Together they hid from and escaped dangerous beasts, living in harmony with nature.

As the ancient eastern myth tells it, the world stood on the back of a turtle, and on the turtle stood an elephant. And both of them rested upon the water. This myth reflected the love between the children of Adam and Eve, and that most beautiful pair who came after them.

The middle son, Sixteenth, took Jupiter as his wife. Perhaps of all the sisters she seemed to him the one it would be easiest to get along with. She was not especially attached to any of her brothers or sisters and was not particularly talkative, and he thought it would be easier to find common

ground with her. But once they were finally joined and he had spent time with Jupiter, he understood how badly he had misjudged her. Talking with her proved anything but easy. For the most part she remained closed off, kept their conversations to the barest minimum, and he constantly felt that she merely tolerated his presence. When children came, everything only grew worse, until at last he ceased to find any joy in her at all. He would leave the house and simply wander aimlessly, to escape the turmoil that reigned in his own home. This is how he happened one day upon the family of his younger brother, Twenty-Eighth. They struck him at once as so perfect — so attuned to one another. He found himself easily captivated by the sight of them, so deeply absorbed in watching them that once was never enough. At first it was simply something he passed by from time to time, but the more often he passed, the more he wanted to see them again, until it became a habit. What began as a rare occurrence began to repeat itself again and again. Sixteenth kept relentless watch over his younger brother's family. Day and night he spied on them and hated that they could be happy without him. They spent much time together, delighted in each other's company, and resembled true, close friends. He could watch them for hours, unable to tear himself from the pull of their happiness.

He felt with growing clarity that his own family was sliding toward the same fate his parents had once suffered, whereas everything in Twenty-Eighth's family was turning out quite differently. Sixteenth tried with all his strength to be a worthy head of his own family. He often did not know how to handle his children, and simply handed them off to their mother. Twenty-Eighth had no such difficulties; his children loved him, spent time with him, played, and simply delighted in his company, and Sixteenth noticed that his brother met with no difficulty even in tenderness toward his own wife. It was not only their closeness — but the way he touched her while the children were occupied with their own affairs, in the light kiss he gave her while she went about the housework, in their carefree jokes with one another. The sincerity of their smiles and laughter wounded Sixteenth's heart. He wanted the same for himself and his family, but however hard he tried to build his life after his brother's example, he could not find in himself the qualities it required. Everything he attempted turned against him — perhaps his own family had fallen into such decline that it could no longer be saved. His loved ones simply did not believe in him enough to believe in what he offered. The one time he tried to arrange things as they were with Twenty-Eighth, it did not last even a week: the children would not listen to him, and Sixteenth's wife… well, in truth, she had never listened to him at all. The only genuine bond between them was physical, and the moment both had gotten what they sought, that bond died. He could not even provoke her enough to draw any response at all — it was an exhausting business. It felt like endless self-torment, for just when it seemed he had finally found the way, something would happen, and everything would return to where it had been. And so, hard as it was for him to seek comfort in what Twenty-Eighth

had built for his family, Sixteenth found that watching them, hating his brother for having built what he himself could not, was easier than going home and enduring the torments that awaited him there.

Again and again, Twenty-Eighth and his beloved hid from their strange brother, Sixteenth, who never worked up the nerve to attack them again. They could feel the ill will radiating from him as he spied on them from behind the forest leaves. Twenty-Eighth was a strong protector and was not afraid of Sixteenth — he was ready to overpower him, if it came to that.

Several human generations later, an angel was born. She appeared in the form of the most beautiful of girls. She had everything one could wish to see in a girl. Her eyes were of heavenly beauty, and her finely cut nose and delicate lips set her apart from everyone around her. People, however, did not recognize an angel in her. They gave her another name, unaware of her true origin, and counted themselves fortunate to have her among them. But fate was cruel to such beauty. Her charm and beauty turned into an evil fortune. People did not love perfection and wished to cause her pain — they deliberately excluded her from their games and aimed sharp, mocking words at her. Again and again the angel heard cruel words spoken of her; at first she paid them no mind, wishing for no quarrels, and a friend always advised her never to answer her tormentors. But over the years the words did not cease. People would not let it go. And so the angel decided that her friend’s path was perhaps not the truest one, and began answering those who attacked her. She refused simply to endure and suffer the insults. She answered with angry, contemptuous words, and sometimes, when passions ran high, did not restrain herself in action either. The angel also had no patience for fools, and fought as well as she could. Over the years the angel became a genuine threat. She no longer fought merely to defend herself, but to frighten others. Some grew to fear her and tried to avoid her wherever they could. Many were troubled to their core by how things had turned out. It was hard to believe that their small angel, their perfect, charming, beautiful girl, had become such an untamable creature. She rebelled against them, listened to no one. People grew afraid of this angel, considering her mad. She, for her part, relished the feeling of power over events and influence over people.

In her next life, the mistakes and harm the angel had caused stripped her of her former beauty. The creator made the angel pay for her evil designs, stripping her of her powers; she gradually lost her beauty as well, becoming no longer as lovely as before. In her next life she was born a young man, and repeated the same absurd mistakes once committed against her, when she had been a girl — only now they were far worse. He became so terrible, so unmanageable, that he stalked children who had not yet reached maturity, and even after warnings continued to pose a danger to those around him. It was an endless spiral, and with each passing day it became clearer: this angel was incapable of proving to people that he could be good.

But deep in his chest lived a demon that could flare up in his eyes at any moment. No matter how many times he was reborn, no matter how many chances he received, he invariably returned worse than before, for such was his very nature. He was evil at his core, and this part of him showed itself in every life he lived. As his evil designs ripened in his heart, he lost all his beauty and sincerity and became the very embodiment of hell itself — the personification of everything evil and vain.

Life was not easy. Human families killed and fought over food. They would not tolerate those who tried to take their only source of sustenance. As more and more people appeared on the earth, they began fighting over provisions and the right to possess the beautiful things around them. Beyond food, families relocated as well, to gain independence and found a new city. Lands, waterfalls, mountains, and seas — all of this one family or another wished to claim for itself. Most alluring of all were lands where one might graze livestock. Large families wanted to possess lands with green pastures for their animals. In that time the angel managed to seize power and subjugate the strength of the people. This angel became a great politician for all time.

Human families grew, and they waged war without ceasing. Thus humanity developed. This is why people had to spread out across the whole world with their families, trying to escape wars between clans.

To avoid war, families began settling ever farther from one another.

They did not wish to waste themselves in wars that led only to death, and so they went far away, to live where others could not find them. As they set off to settle in distant lands, they learned new languages and new customs. They journeyed into far regions, crossing rivers and vast forests, until they found places with green pastures for their livestock. Their journey took many days, stretching into months, and sometimes years, before they found a place to settle.

Families that grew too numerous overpowered those with fewer members. And so the smaller families sought to go as far as they could from their oppressors and those who wished them ill. Every family strove to take more wives, to grow and multiply in number, for the more of them there were, the greater their chances of victory in war.

Until, at last, the whole world was filled with hundreds of different languages, born of the distant journeys of those who fled war and strife — and then whole tribes began waging war in an organized way. They went out in great numbers, to fight those they believed they could overcome.

Insert: The Hormonal Matrix of Love

(A scientific insert — set apart visually from the mythic text)

The six "harmonics" of feeling mentioned in the book's original concept can be tied to what happens to the characters in this chapter. This is not a diagnosis of the characters, but a way of seeing that even the most "mythic" of acts have a recognizable inner nature.

Hormone	What it does	Where it shows up in this chapter
Dopamine	attraction, anticipation, the thrill of the chase	Adam and Eve's first intimacy under the moon; Sixteenth's pull to come and spy on his brother's family again and again
Oxytocin	attachment, trust, care	Eve's lesson to Sixteenth; her decision to stay with the children rather than with Adam
Serotonin	a sense of belonging, stability	present in Twenty-Eighth with his eldest sister; its absence is the source of Sixteenth's unease in his own marriage
Cortisol	stress, anxiety, defensiveness	Adam's anger at the sight of Eve's closeness with their son; his growing irritability after his daughter's death
Testosterone	drive, rivalry, territoriality	Adam's jealousy over the attention Eve gives Sixteenth
Vasopressin	loyalty, guarding one's own	Twenty-Eighth, ready to overpower Sixteenth but never striking first

Adam's anger in this chapter is not simply "a bad temper." It is what happens when cortisol and testosterone go too long unbalanced by oxytocin: anxiety looks for release in control rather than closeness. Sixteenth's madness is the mirror case: an excess of dopamine-driven longing ("I want

what my brother has”) paired with a lack of oxytocin and serotonin at home turns envy into destructive obsession.

Questions for self-reflection

- In Adam and Eve’s dispute — exchange versus labor — which position feels closer to you in your own relationships? Has it changed as you’ve grown older?
- Have you ever caught yourself in a moment when anxiety (cortisol) disguised itself as anger at someone close to you, the way it did for Adam?

Chapter 6. Eve and the Angel

Adam and Eve found themselves in different worlds. Love and grief drove them apart. Adam became too dangerous. He could no longer remain near his family. Their relationship reached the point where both understood: separation was inevitable. They had both been waiting for it. And so, without quite realizing it, they were both preparing themselves for the inevitable. Though Adam and Eve were reborn and multiplied a million times over, only in one of these forms of continuation could the true Adam and Eve be recognized, rather than merely their reflection and transformation.

They always retained the chance to look one another in the eye and choose love. Though Adam and Eve grew more demanding of each other, Adam still recognized Eve’s beauty and kindness. Eve saw his strength and abilities. In Adam’s world, everything is bought and sold; he sought other bonds. The connection they needed for a shared future was slipping away between them. But they did not realize what sacrifices would be required to build the world they wanted. Both the Alpha Male and the Alpha Female possessed unearthly power, but one of them would have to yield for the sake of the common good. Adam, the Alpha Male, created and understood the first law of nature — the very law that led to the appearance of the Alpha Female. To gain something, one must give something up. And so the Alpha Male was cast into a deep sleep, so that a rib might be taken from his body. He firmly believed in exchange on the principle of the bargain; for him, all human relationships were to be built on this principle.

The trouble was only that Eve, the Alpha Female, did not share this belief. She wanted to turn everything the other way. She believed that not everything need be earned in exchange for something else — some blessings come of their own accord, or are born of persistent labor. She was far more concerned with building a world ruled by mutual love and understanding, a world bound by a spirit of unity, belonging, and shared consciousness, rather than by simple exchange. The world is more than market relations; love, kindness, and respect — these are the true things this world ought to strive for.

The Alpha Male and the Alpha Female disagreed on what the future world ought to be. They began to drift apart… began to question what had once bound them, and what they had once believed in. But the Alpha Female waited patiently, hoping the Alpha Male's views would change.

They came together and brought many children into the world. The novelty of this experience distracted them for a time from their arguments about the future world, until the children grew up and began multiplying themselves. The world changed, little by little. Men and women grew ever more numerous, and this expansion was only the beginning.

The time came to decide whose views would prevail. The Alpha Male held firmly to his conviction that the world should and would be built on the principle of exchange. But the Alpha Female did not share this view. A new chasm opened in their relationship.

The Alpha Male bought love and friendship. He sold his daughters and everything best he had, throughout the whole of his history. The more he sold, the poorer he felt. It was a vicious circle. The Alpha Male paid no attention to his companion's dissatisfaction with his way of life, his values, his convictions. He was the supreme head of their union, and so he held fast to his faith. Were he rich as a king, he would still drive his bargains; were he poor as a shepherd, he would behave exactly the same.

Humanity flourished, and the earth filled with people. The Alpha Male bought loyalty from the men around him in exchange for protection by night. He bought the loyalty of women. Everything was firmly in his grasp. He ruled over the animal kingdom and struck bargains with beasts. But not one bargain went by without sacrificing something greater, merely to keep everything in its place.

To the dragons he sold lesser beasts in exchange for their submission. To wild birds he sold smaller birds, to keep them at a distance. Bit by bit he bought their love and trust in him.

This was also the age when the first humans walked the earth, shrouded in mystery. The Alpha Male was a deep thinker, and he foresaw an age when his power might falter, when he could no longer buy love and favor. He still remained the first man on earth, and he knew that the other people, created through him, envied his position. He knew how great his power had grown, but what use was power if a plot was brewing against him? Sometimes the surest moment to sell is the moment one knows exactly who is ready to buy.

And the Alpha Male's daughters, the first generation of womankind, were the most beautiful creatures one could ever see. Every man dreamed of them. Mighty giants were not content with the women of their own tribes, and were willing to strike bargains with the Alpha Male if his daughters

were part of the deal. This is precisely why he was quick to sell or marry off his daughters to these beings.

By their presence at the courts of the first men and other beings, the daughters could also shield their father from what still lay ahead. Whether they agreed to this design or not did not concern him; he constantly reminded his family of the necessity of exchange.

Despite all their pleas, he pressed on and married off his daughters one after another. He did not listen to his children's weeping, and continued to act as he believed right for everyone. He did all this without the consent of either the children or their mother.

The one flaw in his design was that he failed to see: not everything can be bought, and not everyone can be sold. But he stubbornly went on living his life, giving no thought to others.

The Alpha Female did not sell her children; she was ready to fight for them. She knew that love cannot be bought. The people closest to us are our kin, and what we have is the most precious thing there is. Life is a gift from God; God cannot be deceived. God sees everything and remembers everything; sooner or later we come face to face with our own mistakes and the mistakes of others, and repeat them again and again, until we become better.

She knew that everything has its price and that sooner or later people pay for their mistakes, and that evil, like kindness, always finds its way back.

Eve loved her family so much that she was ready to give it everything, to raise her children and devote her whole life to them. More than anything in life, she loved her children. The Alpha Female understood that she must rise and fight for this, or it would all be taken from her. She drifted ever further from the Alpha Male, and at last decided to leave him, having endured his selfishness across many generations, many civilizations and ages. But he refused to change.

A deep chasm opened between them, and in the end they parted… would they be fated to meet again? Would they fight to find themselves? Would the world wait for their new birth?

Eve found a new passion in the form of a fallen angel.

For thousands of years, Eve and the Angel were mad lovers — from the time of the Flood, from the time of the Babylonian reckoning, the birth of the Messiah, and the industrial revolution of our own day. She knew his nature and supported him through the hardest times of his life. Alpha Females killed those better than themselves and took the place of the best.

This angel, having become a demon, was consumed by a hunger for greatness and longed for grand achievements; he was alone, as many men are. Physically he could not surpass other men, and so she began to help him.

He brushed her breast with his lips without meaning to, and felt Eve relax, arching backward in a languid curve.

They ruled the minds of nations, though not always knowingly. The tricks he employed carried him to the pinnacle of events — to control minds, to deceive, whenever his own salvation required it. Leaders of nations won wars to save their people and defend their homeland, and, having gained power, became rulers — only to be betrayed and killed. The angel took the place of the ruler; all he needed was as long a glory as possible, and for this he was capable of anything, though in truth he wished only for peace and calm for himself. He was not steady in the face of fear or anxiety. Often he put the weak, women, and children in harm's way, merely to protect himself from attack.

He could sell his own soul, merely to enslave others and feel himself a god. Of course, he played no small role in the very design of the Egyptian pyramids — especially in the size and shape of the stone blocks, which were engineered by angels of fire and darkness. He crept into the minds of those who studied the sciences and exalted himself through their very discoveries. He made people feel like gods, seizing for himself all the glory the moment he had taken hold of their minds. The civilizations of Egypt, Babylon, the Vatican, and other great cities were born precisely because of this angel's existence. He reveled in worship of himself, and so directed the order of

human affairs in such a way as to feel himself the very greatest he had always wished to be.

Their bond endured for thousands of years. They watched whole civilizations rise and fall. They reached the point where Eve could no longer live without him. She was ready to give her own life, if only the angel's earthly wishes could be fulfilled. But it wounded her that he regretted the years spent at her side.

On the day of their first meeting, he called himself Ifrit, and she called him Efriti. They were of the same tribe. It was a sunny day in a desert valley, where she had migrated with her tribe. Eve, as the first mother, cared for her children and for all the creatures of the world. All of them suffered from hunger and thirst. But she had no notion that a demon lurked in the very air — a demon who had adored her from afar all along; a woman like her was, to him, like water able to quench a thirst in the desert.

The angel attacked a small girl who was playing with her friends, and she died from his cruelty. Eve happened to witness it; she cried out, but could not stop him — it all happened too suddenly and too fast. She grieved bitterly for the dead girl, and named her Djann. But they had to continue on their way, to find water and food.

(New note: the first recognition of the addiction) Later, much later, Eve would ask herself why, on that very day when he killed a child before her eyes, she had not fled from him but stayed. She never found an answer — only a feeling, familiar to her ever since, every time Ifrit returned after a long absence: a relief so enormous it eclipsed everything she knew about him. She called this love, because she had no other word for it. But at times, in the brief hours between his departures and returns, it seemed to her more like a thirst that could be quenched by nothing but him alone — and that this was exactly why she was never truly satisfied.

This was the fallen angel who assured her he was the finest of men. Though he was not as predatory as the Alpha Males, he remained forever cunning. Many times his deceit might have been exposed, but the heavenly angels always came to his aid, and it was never easy to prove his guilt and his weaknesses.

He was mad, he made mistakes Eve did not wish to admit to herself. Eve chose to trust this fallen angel, though many told her she did not deserve his trust. On the other hand, Eve refused to see him for the supernatural being he truly was. Eve went on loving and trusting him for millennium after millennium. Children were born to them, and they grew ever more attached to one another. He wanted to leave her many times, but she always found a reason for him to stay.

Ifrit was the embodiment of fire in human form. His eyes glittered like diamonds, and his voice rang with absolute selfishness and pride. His voice was so poisonous to her, so captivating, that she believed him even when she should not have. She was drawn to the glitter of his eyes and his self-assurance. In carnal love he was like a man possessed. Eve built her whole life around this angel, for she believed true love comes but once in a lifetime. The first love was the real one, though only a still greater love could ever replace the first. She was utterly consumed by love for the angel, and so refused to notice the mistakes this demon committed.

When the angel offered her his design — to let her share in their plans for the future — she had no choice but to accept his offer. Together they would rule the earth, would build a world by their own laws. They would sit side by side, age would follow age, but their love would remain the same — or so, at least, it seemed to her.

(New scene: a concrete example of "tricks and deceit") One such case Eve remembered especially clearly, though she did not like to recall it. A certain king of the southern lands refused to recognize the angel's power and openly mocked him at his own court. Ifrit longed to appear before him in his true form and burn away his pride with fire, but Eve stayed his hand. "Fire will only make a martyr of him," she said, "and people believe martyrs more readily than living kings. Let me handle it." She entered the king's retinue as a simple woman seeking shelter, and spent only three nights at his side, listening to his secret fears — of an heir scheming for the throne, of a counselor he did not trust. She invented nothing: she merely repeated these fears as though she had heard them from others, until the king himself came to believe he was betrayed by everyone around him. By the end of the third night he had executed his best counselor and imprisoned his own son. The court was seized with terror, and when Ifrit appeared the next morning in the guise of a savior, the frightened people opened the gates to him themselves. Eve had not spoken a single false word — and in this, she told herself afterward, lay the difference between her and the demon she had bound herself to. But a truth spoken in order to destroy is no lighter than a lie. She knew this, and went on doing it all the same, in other kingdoms, for other victories — not because she believed any more in the angel's cause than before, but because she found in herself no ability to say no to him when he asked.

It all began in the bathing chamber of his magnificent castle. She had only just given birth; a flood of feeling swept over her as she looked upon the newborn.

When the first child was born, it was a true miracle. Everything had worked out for Eve. What further proof did she need to be certain that her union with the fallen angel was fate's own will?

“Will he have supernatural power, like the angels?” asked Gaia, Eve’s longtime friend and midwife. She stood, washing the blood-streaked infant in the basin.

Eve’s belly had regained its former flatness, and she bathed naked in the great basin. She washed her whole body with the finest fragrant soaps. She savored the velvety touch of the soapy water.

She also watched Gaia closely, for she did not trust her. She trusted no one and believed no one. She would have done well to trust Gaia, for it was Gaia who had told her of the angel’s cruelty and unfaithfulness. Gaia was one of those who wished her to leave the angel. And though Eve paid this no mind, deep down she believed Gaia wanted the angel for herself. What Eve and the angel had achieved together was the very thing millions of women dreamed of, and never attained.

And so, though Gaia was now tending to her so carefully, Eve did not trust her one bit.

Gaia was a beautiful woman. Were a beauty contest held, Eve would have granted Gaia second place, keeping first for herself.

This was a woman with a full bosom, full hips, and thick black hair. She had a warm smile and a welcoming temperament.

She held Eve’s infant in her arms, gently washing away the blood. The baby stopped crying and now cooed softly.

“I don’t know,” said Eve, looking at the infant. Carrying him, she had worried about his nature. Never before had a child been born of a human and an angel. And so, once she finally accepted this, anxiety gripped her: what if the child she was to bear turned out to be a monster?

“Maybe he’ll have superpowers,” Eve said at last. “We won’t know until he’s grown.”

A spark flashed in Gaia’s eyes. “And what if he does? Wouldn’t it be wonderful if your son gained the strength and the power to fly, like his father? And if this child does have superpowers — won’t he be dangerous to the whole world?”

This son, should he indeed possess superpowers, might grow even stronger than his father, for in him the power of the angel and her own had joined. If he turned out evil, she might not live to see even the next millennium.

“I will raise him right,” said Eve. “I will raise him kind. I will teach him to respect others. I will teach him — to be!”

“Admirable,” said Gaia. “But the boy’s fate is already decided. If he is meant to be evil, he will be evil. If he is meant to be good, he will be good. Neither you nor the angel has the power to change that.”

“I refuse to believe that, Gaia,” Eve said gravely. “I refuse to accept it.”

“I did not mean to sadden you on a day that should be one of joy,” said Gaia, “but you determined the course of your own life the day you chose to lie with the demon himself.”

Two things struck Eve at once: Gaia’s bluntness and her audacity. Usually Gaia advised her, in soft and careful words, to leave the angel. But now, for the first time, she had called her beloved a demon outright. Had Eve not been sitting in the basin, she might have killed Gaia on the spot.

“Watch your tongue,” Eve warned. “Or you may lose it.”

Fear flickered in Gaia’s eyes. She realized she might have struck a nerve. “That is not what I meant.”

“Your own words betrayed you, and your own words condemned you,” Eve remarked. “Your feelings and your words give you away. Clearly you serve only my late beloved.”

“Adam is not dead,” said Gaia. “They say he still wanders the deserts of the Middle East.”

“To me, he is dead,” Eve explained.

“So be it,” Gaia answered, “but I do not serve your late husband. I am simply your good friend, and that is why I tell you the truth.”

“Enough!” Eve cut her off. “We will not speak of this again!”

And they never returned to that conversation again.

Some time later, another child was born to them.

This time a girl, whose beauty was astonishing. In her the father’s strength and the mother’s beauty combined. Word of her spread across all lands, and people came to see her with their own eyes. Many more children were born to them, and this inevitably bound Eve to him ever more tightly. But the sad truth was that he wanted to leave her many times over. This caused her great suffering.

Eve had no choice but to remind the angel of their first meeting. On that day she had felt a strange presence. Before her eyes he had shown her his true form. The angel was mighty. He ruled lands in the air, divine castles of hidden heavens. He revealed to her his true nature, embraced and lit by heavenly light. Eve delighted in the joy of being near the angel Ifrit; she had

grown so fused with him in soul that she believed they would remain together even until the end of time, and in the next life as well.

It was Eve who had become utterly possessed by him. She was entirely blind to his dark side; she was in love with him. Among the traits of the angel that captivated her were his fiery nature and his defiance. Together they struggled against one another, like water against fire. The angel gave her a protection no one else ever had, and made her feel that she could not survive alone.

He gave her promises, and she accepted them readily. The angel's wicked nature did not trouble her in the least — perhaps because, in certain moments, he yielded to her wishes. He also valued family above all else. He loved and cherished his children, and this is precisely why she could not understand why he so desperately wanted to leave her.

But the angel made Eve feel worthless. After all the love she gave him, he never once acknowledged her as an equal companion. He saw her only as a human, and in the world of angels, humans were considered lesser beings. She had spent more than a thousand years with this angel. She herself had made him into the powerful being he had become. And she feared neither him nor the age in which they lived.

In ancient times Eve's passion grew so unrestrained that she, together with a crowd of women and sirens, would attack men, forcing them into love. One of her chosen ones performed the rite of circumcision upon himself, simply to avoid drawing the attention of mad women and being subjected to violence. Eve admired his act and his courage. Eve wished that the Angel, too, would undergo the same rite.

"No!" the demon answered.

"What do you mean — no?!" Eve asked, astonished. "I thought you were brave, strong, and fearless."

The demon looked at Eve. He towered over her. They stood on a small balcony overlooking their vast domain. Everywhere on the ground servants labored. Angels rose and descended over their home. Despite this ceaseless swarm of activity, all around remained calm and beautiful. The moon and stars shone especially bright in the sky that night.

"I will not let myself be forced to prove my courage," the demon growled, "least of all before a human!"

The growl in his voice would have sent an entire army fleeing. But not Eve.

"If a human is capable of it, why aren't you?" Eve said. "By refusing, you bring shame and dishonor upon your own name."

The demon, realizing he could not frighten Eve into submission, looked away. He sighed. “Please, do not make me do this.”

Eve frowned too. She was angry. Angry, because every time he behaved this way, she ended up giving in to him.

“What do you fear most about this rite?” Eve asked.

“I fear the pain,” the demon admitted.

“But you are an angel,” Eve answered. “Pain should mean nothing to you.”

Eve did all she could to draw from the angel some proof of his courage and manhood, but he feared pain. And so he persuaded everyone to perform this rite upon infants in his place. His argument was that infants cry regardless and quickly forget the pain.

The angel’s wish left a trail of blood in its wake. This did not trouble Eve — she knew that sometimes, for the sake of a higher good, certain things must be done at a certain time. But now that he wanted to leave her, she began to wonder whether life with this angel had been worth it all.

Their mighty bond grew stronger millennium after millennium. She played an essential role in the angel’s victories. Though he possessed the power of wisdom and could penetrate the minds of mortals, none of his powers would ever have come into the world without Eve’s help, for she, even having become immortal, still carried her mortal nature within her; through her knowledge and experience of human nature, she inclined people to submit to her beloved’s cruelty.

The Alpha Male had once cared for peace and stability, and went to any length to realize his designs. He bought love and loyalty, selling what mattered most to himself. Through his actions, beasts came to depend on the flesh of weaker animals, and the customs of exchange and bargaining took root — but he did all this thinking only of his own survival.

Now, reflecting on it, Eve understood that his designs had not been so bad after all. Perhaps she ought to have been more patient, for life with the angel had shown her: demons are creatures concerned only with themselves, and care nothing at all for the human race.

Unlike mortals on earth, angels were born of other angels, and their ways paid no heed at all to human customs.

Eve was relentlessly tormented by nightmares — women and children screaming, tortured by Ifrit and his dark angels. They spared no one in their hunts. Her conscience tormented her, for he used people to fulfill whatever he desired. He was an immortal being who far preferred to rule people through fear rather than through love and patience.

The Alpha Male would never have behaved this way; his only concern had been the preservation of stability.

There was an enormous difference between these two men. Eve knew he had not kept his promises to her, but the chasm that had once separated her from Adam still remained as well. She had not seen the Alpha Male in a whole millennium. She did not know whether he still existed in the earthly world, or had chosen to remain among the angels. She had been so enraged, back when he sold their daughters merely to make peace with the giants and the first humans, that she had never forgiven him. In her anger and outrage she had accepted the angel's offer without hesitation; and now she wondered again, for that very beloved for whom she had endured and sacrificed so much had now firmly resolved to leave her. She shuddered, picturing him leaving her for another angel.

Eve had not left her former love of her own will; it seemed to her there was something hypocritical in this, whenever she remembered herself in paradise beside Adam. Though he had been stubborn, he had valued human life — perhaps because he himself had been human.

Eve also tried to preserve the good that was in her. She was ready to sacrifice herself for love, to give up everything she had, if only to nurture that love. Unfortunately, she had to raise and care so devotedly for the demons she bore that it proved, again and again, that even Eve makes mistakes. Though the path was not an easy one, she learned that sometimes giving all one's love to someone is still not enough. So it had been with her, and with the angel. It was she who had sacrificed more; it was she who had shown him the path to power over the earth, but in the very moment she grew weak, he was ready to turn away from her.

Eve loved her family so much that she was ready to give it everything, to raise her children and devote her whole life to them. More than anything in life, she loved her children. But even beside the angel, her children were not safe. The angel was unpredictable, but she believed that deep down he was good, and that goodness is the strongest power of all.

Unfortunately, the world had grown accustomed to the principle of buying and selling love, and it became important to Eve to teach people — but above all her own children — that love can never be bought. Love that is bought is not true love. It is temporary and never capable of sacrifice. She would love again, in hope of one day finding her man.

Eve had abandoned Adam too soon, and set off to explore the world at the side of a demon who cared more for himself than for her and their children. She needed to find him. The Alpha Females needed to unite with the Alpha Males, to build a new family, a new love, new laws. But this would not be an easy task, for she had lost all their former closeness.

At last she understood: in this world there was only one man for her, and she needed to find her way back into his arms.

A difficult choice lay before her. The very thought of going against the man she had once believed in filled her with dread, but she knew it had to be done. Eve admits she was wrong to abandon the Alpha Male. She should have tried harder to convince him to see the world through her eyes. She should have persuaded him that the world would be a better place if people were taught to love one another, to accept each other's differences.

She needed to make her choice as soon as possible. She would return to Adam — but there was one small difficulty. She wanted to do right. The angel feared the higher laws and acted according to law. But the Alpha Males knew how to play with laws — losing, or winning. This Eve could not forgive. She had poured so much of herself into raising civilization, establishing laws and decent conditions of life for people. She would not forgive destruction. The earth was given by God to humankind, so that they might exist and make their own choices with the free will He had granted them, rather than submit to the will of demons.

Before the final storm broke, there was one rule that had to be broken, if she and Adam were ever to find each other again in this world: if people did not learn to choose their partners by heart, Adam and Eve would never be able to find one another.

She would show people that love has neither beginning nor end. It has neither cause nor malicious intent. It was with just such a love that Adam had once loved her, before a cruel fate had parted them.

Long years lay ahead of her — to teach mortals to find their other halves and to love them. Only this could break the old rule; only this could rebuild the law of love anew. But she was ready to try.

Questions for self-reflection

- Eve calls her pull toward Ifrit love, yet notices in it a thirst that never fully satisfies. Is this difference familiar to you — between love and a need mistaken for love?
- She never once lied to the king of the southern lands — and still destroyed his kingdom with truth used as a weapon. Where, in your view, is the line between influence and manipulation, if outright lying is not part of the definition?

Next: Chapter 7 — "Foretell Your Future." Here the book turns to address the reader directly for the first time: the myth of the lunar cycles and the choice of fate becomes a practical guide.

Chapter 7. Foretell Your Future

Here the voice of the book changes. Until now, the myth has been speaking to you — now the author speaks to you directly, as though you were sitting together looking up at the same moon. Adam and Eve are compounds of hydrogen, and hydrogen, as Part II explained, is doomed to search for a partner in order to become whole. Everything that follows is an attempt to explain how that pull works not in myth, but in your own life.

What Love Is

In a world of chance, in a distant galaxy, it is very important to know how to model your future.

Our ancestors laid a matrix into our genes. The love we build is the matrix in which we live, and in which our children will live.

The best partner in love is a true friend, a companion with whom you wish to spend your whole life and go on giving life to descendants. Such a pair is able to live in harmony with one another under any circumstances.

Adam and Eve are compounds of hydrogen. They can bond with other organic elements, such as carbon or nitrogen, but only in bonding with each other do they feel freedom and happiness. For they are the matrix of all humankind, and when they find one another, other pairs, too, become able to find love and goodness. When Adam and Eve are together once more, it will become far easier for everyone to find their love and their happiness. People will learn to find true love. The path to it runs through the soul, which adores its other half. The soul is elemental in its structure and is made of particles of the natural elements.

The spiritual world is the sum of the principles that shape a person’s character and affect their spiritual health. Spiritual compatibility is much like chemistry. Its reactions occur at the level of instinct. A person produces and radiates energy, which interacts with the energy of others. People are able to feel this energy and express feeling through body language and emotion. Nonverbal communication draws people together; they want ever greater closeness and contact. This can bring a satisfaction comparable to that of physical closeness. This is why people are drawn to one another in friendship. But not all the principles of our souls are compatible with one another — some are dangerous to life itself. Hostility and revulsion can arise. This is why it is so important to know yourself, to know your own soul. It is good to have a clear sense of whom we wish to build a new life with, to care for and to raise a child with. Usually, natural balance does much of the work for us: as if of its own accord, we find kindred souls by chance, by natural means. Sometimes we wish to change our lives and find that rare person of our dreams. I often trust in this natural path, in life itself and in chance. My own experience shows that this is not the fastest path, but it is

reliable and bears fruit. As a rule, physical attraction is stronger than spiritual closeness. Appearance and behavior in love play an enormous role. People with strong genes feel passion for people with weaker genes, in order to pass on to them a part of their own energy and balance. Ordinary, moderate people wish everyone around them to be just as ordinary. It is so hard to reach this norm in a world with so many great possibilities, each one so frightening and bitter to lose. This brings us to the subject of partnership in love and relationships.

Love is a rule one need not follow. Love is a state rarely attained, and, as a rule, does not last long. Trust your instincts more than you trust love. Instincts drive us to strive for what is best and save us in difficult circumstances. People want to live in luxury and safety, to be kings of beauty and music, to rule the world for even a few hours. They want to enjoy everything and do nothing, so that everyone else does everything for them. The passion that lives within you will reveal much about you; it will guide you at every step and influence a great many of your decisions. Love and passion greatly resemble one another. Passion is a force that carries a person to the very end of their path. The decision to love is not as simple as people imagine. It demands fidelity and careful attention to the object of one’s love. Make one mistake, and everything may be destroyed. We will work especially hard if we wish to achieve a lasting union. Another thing that darkens the notion of love is fear. What we fear reveals a great deal about ourselves, and speaks volumes about our character and our experience. If we fear love, perhaps we fear the pain and bitterness inseparable from it. Love is not a simple thing. It is like a flower growing among thorns. It can be compared to a fruit whose seeds are bitter. At the first bite comes a sweet, syrupy juice, and the tongue rejoices in it. But the longer we savor this sweetness, the closer we come to the seeds themselves. And when at last we meet the bitterness that comes with love, it turns into a dull, disheartening pain. Most often, people never fully recover from a painful experience of love, and this breeds in them enough fear to live with for the rest of their lives. This, precisely, defines them — their inability to love. Another aspect of love that instills fear in people is trust. What we trust can affect us for good or ill. Trust runs very deep, and the very act of trusting is deeply symbolic. We trust only those we consider reliable and capable of drawing out the best in us. We trust only those who, it seems to us, are capable of making us happy — forever. And yet people are not flawless. Driven above all by the present and the past, more than by the future, we are equally subject to our feelings. When trust is broken, fear takes its place, and this will inevitably affect our decision to love. True love is nonetheless attainable, if we learn to listen to the voice of our own reason. It is not somewhere outside us — it is within us, and can be found in our instincts. If we follow them, we will arrive at a new understanding: between baseless passion and fear, love alone stands apart. Love is a feeling of the noblest character. It is patient and kind. It grants us peace, whatever

we may be doing. It also humbles us. Though passion resembles love, it is not its equal. Passion runs extremely hot, and most often fades when things take a turn for the worse. Fear, by contrast, is swift and sharp, and in fear we become far more watchful.

Love, on the other hand, is something else entirely — cautious and never bold. Though it is not easy to admit, love carries a deep meaning for our world. It adds color to our everyday life, steals our time and attention, and wishes to remain with us for a lifetime. It is one of the forces that hold the world together, for if hatred alone lived in every heart, the whole world would fall under the sway of dark feelings. Love is the center of our life. It is the common thread that unites humankind with other living beings. It draws people together and binds them forever. Through love, families are born, and nations begin. We devote our time to it and give it the best we have. We labor our whole lives, not so much for ourselves, as to help those we love find what will make them happy. And if we fail to find a way to solve their troubles, it grieves us. So love is a universal beginning. It makes us dependent on one another, creating an entire network of those who love and are loved. When we grow accustomed to this new peace, it becomes a special kind of bliss, one we can no longer do without. This drives many to extremes — merely to preserve their connection to another person. And then love grows too scorching to hold onto — almost poisonous.

We understand this love only by looking into each other’s eyes. The power of love acts even when we make a different decision and do not wish to speak of our feelings.

Instincts are like the blood that flows through our veins — and the other currents that never cease moving within the body throughout our lives. Those who live and breathe by this need attention of the carnal sort. This can be seen in the bright colors of a tail or in beautiful hair. Nature created attraction as a mighty force in matters of love. The beginning of love lies in attraction. We cannot love those who do not, first of all, attract us. And though love is pure and innocent, it has a carnal side as well. With this feeling comes a need too — the wish to show another person, in the most earthly of ways, the love we feel; hence the very expression “to merge in love.” Physical attention is a healthy part of love, and everyone deserves it. This requires attraction. Nature has endowed both people and animals with what can charm their chosen ones. Beyond bright tails and bright hair, everyone is granted eye color, skin tone, facial shape, height, weight, and a great many other bodily traits. Everyone also has their own preferences among these traits. Some prefer brunettes to redheads — for no particular reason. Some prefer brown eyes to green — in most cases, also for no reason at all. But that spark which draws us toward someone is already planted within us! And we merely act according to what has been, and is, placed in us. Noticing these traits, we are drawn to their bearer. This is the first stage of attraction. The second stage requires something deeper. A

strong mind is needed to be drawn to what is invisible to the eye. Attraction to a person's mind, their values, their manners, convictions, and views runs deeper than the first stage. This is what makes us stay with someone — or leave them. If the second stage proves favorable, we stay. If not, we either leave or try to change that person. The third stage cements friendship and develops the carnal side of love.

Love, as a rule, comes unexpectedly — to those who had not even noticed one another before. Love does not care who chooses it. It is a mystery almost impossible to solve — as though some invisible medium exists between people, inhabited by spirits, or angels, or demons. Love can build an entire life, and can just as easily destroy everything around it, turning into hatred. Love may hold boundless power.

It is not our sincere wish to need people and to become attached to them at heart. All of us strive for independence and self-sufficiency, but this becomes impossible the moment we fall in love and feel loved in return. Life without love becomes difficult. This is why a woman says she needs a man, and vice versa. Happiness in love also depends on the personality and character of the one we are bound to. If our partner is a kind person, we feel calm and fulfilled, and we express our love to them. Say a woman says she loves such a man — that same man will say that, were he a woman, he too would love someone like himself. To fall in love with a person of a different, especially questionable, character and inclination is to bring misfortune upon one's own life and the lives of those around. Reading a person's character at the very start of an acquaintance is not easy. It takes real experience and a particular approach to build relationships and understand how another person affects your life.

In various lands there exists a custom of gazing at the moon by night. This is a symbolic rite. People do this for a great many reasons. The moon is a symbol of love and peace. To truly understand the blessing of love and draw from the moon its healing power, one must be careful with the full moon.

Lunar Cycles and "Your Moon"

(The practical part — a calculation from your date of birth)

The Moon moves in a nearly circular orbit around Earth's center of mass, and its rotation is called "tidally locked" with Earth's. This means the Moon completes exactly one rotation on its own axis for every orbit it makes around Earth. The Moon's orbit is tilted five degrees relative to Earth's orbit around the Sun. Our planet's axis of rotation is tilted at an angle of 23.5 degrees relative to its orbit around the Sun. In fact, the tilt of Earth's axis fluctuates between 22.1 and 24.5 degrees. The reason for this change in angle is that Earth's axis also wobbles on its own. This is caused by the gravitational pull of the Sun, the Moon, and other planets.

The Moon’s motion is bound up with Earth’s motion, and so the Moon rarely returns to exactly the same position, as though gliding above the Earth. The Moon’s position along its orbit shifts over the course of days, months, and years. Earth and the Moon seem, year after year, to retrace the same path, but because of the pull of other stars, their position shifts by imperceptible fractions of a degree.

I believe that every person born on this earth is bound to the moon in a special way — and, perhaps, endowed with a hidden power.

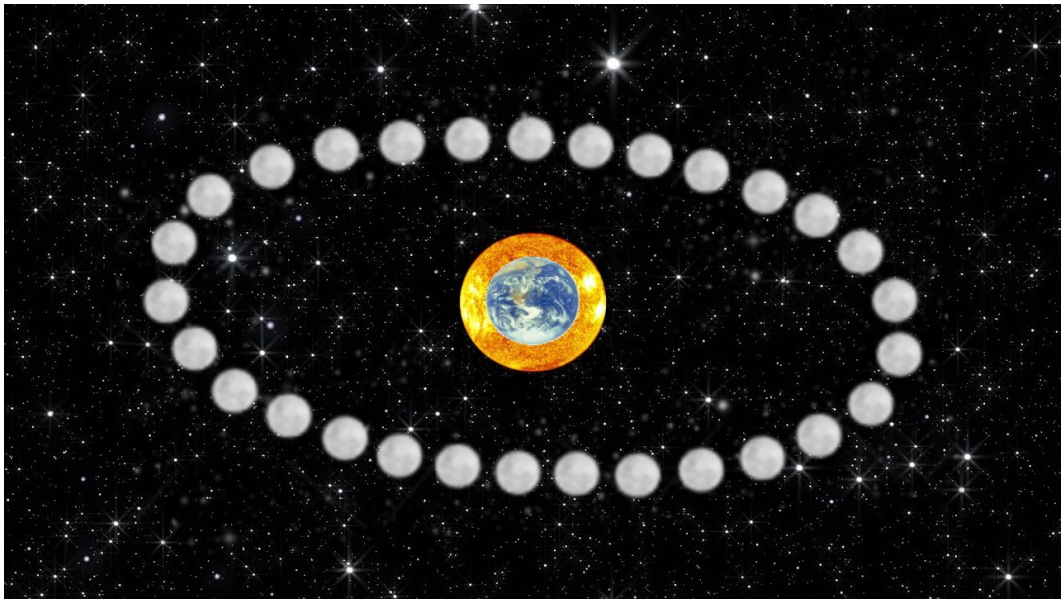
Once every few years, we are given the chance to feel newly born — when the stars in the sky nearly return to the very position they held at our birth. In this moment we can gather greater strength.

At this moment the moon occupies a special position relative to Earth and the stars. The moon’s power flows from that very instant when we were born. I call this moment your moon — the highest cycle of your entire life, when you stand beneath this moon. We did not arrive on this earth by some random error — we were conceived by the higher powers that exist, and by the galactic forces of the universe. The lunar cycle is a direct reflection of human life. At dusk the moon rises — this is a sign of our birth. Slowly its light floods the whole sky — this is a sign of our youth and strength. But with the coming of dawn it begins to fade, slowly and inexorably — and this is a sign of our own decline. You might ask: “Why bring the moon into love at all?” Just watch!

If you trace the moon’s path from the very moment you were born, marking a point on each anniversary of your birth, and then connect these points with a line, an image of a star will open before you. Every point on this star is a moment when we have a chance for new passion. In that moment we might begin a life full of love. In that moment we might meet the one who will change our whole world, who will raise a new wave in our life. This is what we feel, gathering our energy from the cosmos itself. And, having felt this energy, we must understand what kind it is — light or dark. Healthy relationships give rise to light energy, which in turn grants us calm, focus, insight, and clarity of vision. With all this, we gain stability. But if a relationship is unhealthy, instead of stability our spiritual and physical health lies in ruins — a sure sign of dark energy.

This diagram shows the movement of lunar energy across 28 periods. Each period is marked by powerful cosmic energy. Every four years the Moon reaches its limit, and its orbit shifts its tilt. This is a time of new beginning, one that can become a second wind for you.

[Space for infographic: a diagram of lunar energy — 28 points forming a star, each marked with a birthday anniversary.]



The distance between Earth and the Moon is more than fifty times the size of the Moon itself. This shows the strength of Earth's gravity, which exceeds the bounds of known physical law. Different planets have different gravitational strength. This is possible thanks to the composition of their constituent substances, their position among other planets, and other factors — not size and weight alone.

Human beings on Earth, like stars, possess power and attract love, like magnets. At least once in a lifetime, everyone experiences the feeling of love — at different times, or when particular people are met. Some fall in love again and again, and this speaks of another kind of natural power. We cannot force ourselves to fall in love — nor should we try to. Love is a natural phenomenon and a sign of the beginning of new human life.

If you were to look at Earth from distant constellations, Earth and the Moon would appear so close to the Sun, and the Sun's light would so illuminate the neighboring planets, that all these stars, too, would appear as the Sun itself. More than 330 revolutions of Earth around the Sun, and thirteen revolutions of the Moon around Earth, leave behind a powerful magnetic wave, which reflects and radiates a beautiful light into the universe and wraps people in its energy.

We do not notice these waves, nor the very passage of time in the universe. Most of the time we are consumed by worries, forever busy, and so life seems so short. If we could stop, freeze for a moment, we might perhaps feel that something is ceaselessly happening all around us. This living force is the very energy we can draw upon. Do not rush through the days and nights, the months and years. Give and receive exactly as much energy as you need to live to a ripe old age.

We wish to love and want happiness for those we love. Sometimes we hope for a miracle, sometimes we try to achieve everything ourselves and build our own life with our own hands; mostly we are driven by the force of instinct and hormones, and sometimes by what we were taught.

Hormonal Development: From Seven Years Old to Old Age

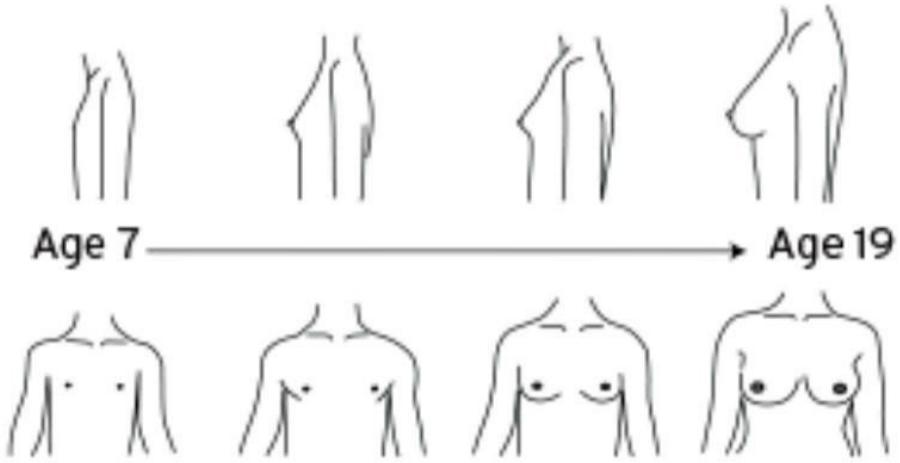
Hormonal development lasts for years, and at every age human sensuality takes on a different shape and role. Our hormones are a mighty driving force that also shapes and directs our behavior at every one of these stages. This is no accident, but the finely tuned work of the body's principal glands.

Hormones are chemical substances produced by the glands of the endocrine system, causing bodily growth and sexual development. Hormonal needs change markedly as we leave childhood and enter the age of maturation.

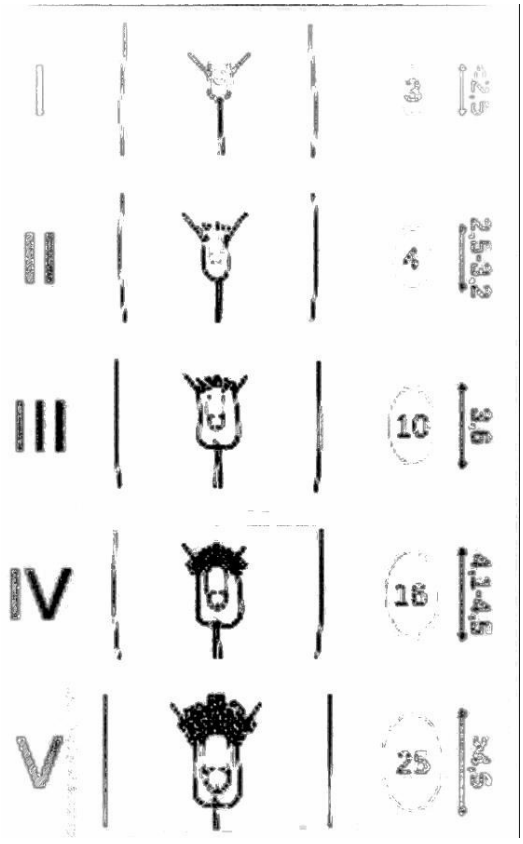
Puberty begins when a region of the brain called the hypothalamus begins producing a hormone — gonadotropin — that triggers the growth of various sex hormones in boys and girls. The age of maturation is marked by numerous bodily, emotional, and hormonal changes. The attainment of sexual maturity — through secondary sex characteristics (the production of semen in men and the cyclical onset of menstruation with the release of an egg cell in women) — becomes the culmination of this process of development.

Already by the age of seven or eight, the human body begins producing the hormones responsible for the changes of adolescence. Maturation itself, as a rule, begins between the ages of 7 and 14 in girls and 10 and 16 in boys. The first sign of maturation in boys is an increase in the size of the testes. Their growth is measured on the Tanner scale — from stage one to stage five. Doctors measure sexual maturation in girls and boys across five stages, based on the development of the reproductive system. By the end of the final stage, around age 18, the growth of a woman's breasts, as a rule, comes to a stop. By age 25, the growth of male sex organs usually stops as well.

Development



Stages of Puberty



When hormones take hold of your body, you notice that your feelings, moods, and desires grow far stronger. Hormones change cyclically. These

feelings shift sharply if you become pregnant, give birth, or breastfeed, and continue to change as menopause approaches. All these changes are natural and expected. Menopause arrives at fifty. This brings rises and falls in hormonal levels.

At ages 16, 18, 21, 25, and 28, the cycle builds progressively.

At ages 32, 36, 42, 50, and 56, the cycle grows changeable. Time now flows in different directions. Carnal energy leaves us.

From the moment you first become ready to begin your sexual life — at 14, 18, 21, 25, 28… — the cycle of hormonal development builds progressively. Every age has its own particular character. Hormonal expressions may deviate from the norm.

In truth, by age 25 a person's carnal nature is fully formed, and both men and women feel mature and ready to wish to become parents.

But I would add to this the age of twenty-eight, to complete this discussion of the power of your moon. I believe that at this age, love is truly magical. Because of hormonal fluctuations, people at this age are usually at the very peak of their sensual maturity.

I would not make the final choice of my whole life in love before learning that true love most often finds us precisely at the age of twenty-eight.

Between ages 36 and 40, both women and men feel a final urge to build a family.

After forty, carnal interest fades, and people wish to care for their body and soul, to seek harmony between them. Carnal energy leaves us.

At fifty, desire weakens with the arrival of menopause. Physical intimacy may occur once every two years, and then ever more rarely.

The fullness of human life depends in large part on the role of hormones. More than fifty hormones have been studied and identified, along with roughly twenty more possible substances of unknown chemical formula. The existence of still other endocrine tissues cannot be ruled out.

Hormones are the chief administrators of every life process: they determine nature, fate, and behavior, and shape the sex of the embryo. But the course a person's personal life takes depends on many causes — genes, character traits, social conventions, hormones. Sometimes one wishes to plan one's life as well as possible, and to calculate one's own strength on the path to success. Know yourself, foretell your future, build a bright tomorrow.

In youth it seemed to all of us that love arrives every spring. But now I would say that love can arrive at any time, and if it arrives late, this is even for the best, for a late love is easier to hold onto, and it lasts longer.

Sometimes we wish everything had started sooner, and when it does not, we grieve and fall into sorrow. But much lies beyond our own choosing. If we could choose everything, the world might perhaps become a perfect place — but it is not so. We can make plans, try to make decisions, but life runs deeper than any of our calculations. And yet there is no cause for despair. We can still find a way to steer our own life, even when the very worst happens. Say, some women wish to bear a child at a certain age, but it turns out that a later pregnancy prolongs a woman's youth and grants her sturdier health. So failing to find love early is not so great a misfortune as it seems. Finding it late may even be better, for by then we are able to recognize and direct all the forces that shape our life and our actions, as already discussed above.

The Six Harmonics of Love

The word "hormone" comes from the Greek and means "to excite." These are biologically active substances produced by the endocrine glands and set in motion a great many processes within the cells of the body.

Love as chemistry depends on the play of hormones. Every day someone falls in love, hoping it is forever. We try to understand the mechanisms of love and hormonal bonds. There are six chief "harmonics" of love: dopamine, adrenaline, serotonin, endorphin, testosterone, and estrogen. It is they that grant us the whole range of sensation and, taken together, govern the stability of our psyche.

When two bodies touch, a synthesis of energy begins. It is accompanied by excitement, trembling, the release of hormones, and the birth of new energy.

In moments of excitement, breathing quickens, the heart beats faster, blood flows faster through the veins, rushing to the most sensitive parts of the body and sharpening sensation. Bright arterial blood, rich in oxygen, floods the brain and gives rise not merely to daydreams, but to genuine fantasies. This is why one does not wish to calm down — one wishes these feelings to last as long as possible.

One feeling gives rise to another, and this is considered an expression of love and attraction. Rapture is a satisfaction born of an overflow of feeling, of the purifying of the blood after intimacy, or simply of excitement. The sexual organs are also excretory organs, endowed with a great many glands that sustain a healthy environment. This is precisely how hormones are born.

Hormones — male testosterone and female estrogen — produced in varying amounts at varying times, drive us to seek a partner. Lovers delight in the heightened attention they pay to one another, and this affects the level of serotonin in the brain.

We focus on one single person, though this choice is shaped by a great many spiritual, personal, and social causes. We are drawn by the unique scent of another person's pheromones, picked up by a special organ within the nasal cavity. On an unconscious level, it signals to the brain whether our genetic combination will prove a fortunate one.

The fruits of the human soul can be divided into desires, infatuations, and attachments. Between the ages of 18 and 20, at the peak of their inner strength, men are especially prone to strong attraction.

Dopamine is pleasure for the brain, its own signal. Adrenaline is a surge of new possibility, a feeling of inspiration, a wish to act; it quickens circulation, speeds metabolism, grants endurance.

Serotonin is a conductor of the brain's electrical impulses. Mood depends on the amount of this substance in brain tissue. It is the chemical regulator of feeling, one that shapes our attitude toward the world; besides this, this hormone improves the clotting of blood.

Endorphin is the joy responsible for softening the effects of adrenaline and serotonin. The brain's nerve cells respond to it much as they respond to morphine. This is why it is called the body's natural morphine, or opiate. It is released during physical closeness with a beloved person.

Testosterone is responsible for the birth of attraction. After age thirty, men's levels decline by 1.5 percent a year. After age forty-five, hormonal balance shifts, and menopause begins — a period in which the body's reproductive system gradually fades. This is most noticeable in women. The body does not immediately accept these changes, and tries to stimulate hormone production through the pituitary gland. This often becomes a cause of mood swings.

Oxytocin is the hormone of behavior; it is responsible for the maternal instinct, is linked to the capacity to experience the height of pleasure, and heightens satisfaction from closeness in love. In women it is released more slowly than in men, and so they need longer caresses and tender conversation. Susceptibility to falling in love depends on this: those who fall in love more often have higher levels of oxytocin.

Vasopressin is responsible for loyalty to a partner and for behavior in society. When its level rises, people become more strongly attached to a single chosen one, whereas in others it instead provokes hostility and aggression.

Energy is born with every breath: oxygen enters the blood, is broken down, gives rise to energy, and penetrates the cells of the body, to be transformed into warmth and light around these bodies. People attract this light and share the warmth of their bodies with others, giving away the best and the worst that is in them. Love breeds love.

After intimacy, people are cleansed, receiving more hormones and pleasure. A light fatigue gives way to sleep. Waking brings new strength and a feeling of confidence in the reliability of the relationship with one's partner. Closeness strengthens a relationship. But its overuse can lead to psychological complexes stemming from sexual or other difficulties. It matters that both partners be balanced, experienced, and strong in this.

One of the last facets of a partner's personality to emerge can be self-assertion, after which interest in the other partner's personality may weaken. Conviction in one's own rightness and superiority is no way to gain confidence in closeness with another person. True satisfaction, both spiritual and physical, is born from the widest range of the mind's workings.

It matters to maintain interest in your own body and your own personality. There is no need to elevate or diminish a partner in your own eyes or theirs — neither before nor after intimacy. Physical attraction is stronger than any psychological effect. Closeness for its own sake promises confidence in oneself and the best intention to continue the relationship.

Compatibility: How to Choose a Partner

All of us need love, and time works in our favor. When you understand how your own life is structured across time, you gain the power to build your future. Decide, with confidence, who deserves to share your time and your attention. The decision to love is as important as the decision to lead a healthy life. Sometimes we underestimate the power of love, the power of relationships. The decision to love is closely bound to the spiritual and emotional side of our lives. If the spiritual and emotional sides are out of order, the physical and social sides suffer as well. This is precisely why we must make our decisions with awareness. Love is more than a sudden pounding of the heart. It is a choice, and a carefully considered one at that. You can choose someone whose virtues will influence your life for the better and help you overcome your own weaknesses. And in the same way, you must be ready to love this person and help them overcome their own weaknesses — for the sake of a shared goal.

Fulfill within yourself the very feeling of life, in order to love. This is the energy that both nature and God require. Spirit unites with higher beloveds and with kindred souls on Earth. Love is no less spiritual than it is physical, sensual, and emotional. The most important side of love is the spiritual one. It is in this that we become one whole, allowing our inner being to lead us. If someone is not right for us, we are able to feel this with our inner sight, but if we ignore this sign, the consequences can be ruinous. In the spiritual world we have many kindred souls and possible companions. And if we manage to meet and join with them in real life, the relationship unfolds easily and smoothly.

People often seek a partner able to complement what they themselves lack in life. This helps achieve balance in a relationship. If one partner is careless, a union with an equally careless partner can bring only chaos and discord to the relationship. But if one is careless, timid, weak, and so on, and beside them stands a partner who is careful, brave, and strong, balance is born. And then the likelihood that this union will endure grows high. Compatibility is a mighty subject, one worth considering in any serious relationship. It matters to be beside those who are compatible with us. At first glance this may seem unimportant, especially in the honeymoon phase of a relationship. This period, as everyone knows, feels almost magical — and passes quickly. It is a time when partners are wholly absorbed in their romantic feelings. But when these feelings begin to fade slowly, and each person’s true nature is revealed, a lack of compatibility can become a genuine misfortune. Compatibility is simply the ability to suit one another. It is a shared set of interests and values, allowing a relationship to flow freely and smoothly. Neglect it even for a moment, and difficulties will surely arise in the future.

Build your future in love with someone who will not damage your character or destroy your life. And your life will change for the better. For those we choose to love, and with whom we share our life, are able to affect the most varied aspects of our existence, and so love must be approached carefully and with awareness. Love is a bright feeling, and nothing dark should ever be born from it. The trouble with our society is that people are inclined to turn away from those who bring out the best in them, in favor of those who merely drain their strength. And then they turn around and defame the very name of love. Selfishness creeps into relationships, a wish to wound the other — emotionally, in their affairs, in their health — and then love departs, and the other is left to find their own way out. But if you look more closely, true love is a calm and peaceful feeling; it brings a quiet longing and a firm foundation. Anyone who truly cares for you will always be thinking of your future happiness, your future health, and your future fate.

Here the author's counsel comes to an end. From here the book returns once more to myth — to the angels who stood beside Adam and Eve from the very first day of creation, and to those among them who chose not to serve, but to rebel.

Questions for self-reflection

- Try drawing your own "moon": mark your date of birth and the next 28 anniversaries of it. Which point on this line feels already passed to you, and which still lies ahead?
- Exchange or labor, passion or trust — which pair of concepts from this chapter comes closest to describing what you are looking for in love right now?

Editor's note: in the original text, the paragraph beginning "All of us need love, and time works in our favor…" and the paragraph beginning "Love is more than a sudden pounding of the heart…" appeared twice, almost word for word. In this edition the repetition has been removed, and the passage kept once — here, at the end of the chapter, where it logically concludes the section on compatibility.

Chapter 8. Angels

The angels of the cosmos were mentioned at the very beginning of this book — as those who help "when your will is pure," who carry good will, strength, and soul across the whole universe (Part I). Iblis, whom we met in

Part II, and Ifrit, whose story became entwined with Eve's fate in Part III, both belong to this same order. This chapter is an attempt to answer, systematically, the question: who are angels in general, and how do some among their number come to be called fallen?

Who Angels Are

The ancient notion of the angel as an eternal spirit dwelling in paradise, beside God, has always given people reason to believe in mighty heavenly beings. People distinguish between fallen angels and holy ones. Different traditions offer different accounts of angels, depending on which heavens they represent, and each angel occupies its own place within one of the countless ranks of the angelic hierarchy. Many religions count the number of angels differently: some speak of seven or even fewer, others of twelve or more.

The idea of the angel is as ancient as religion itself. There is no religion without the existence of these helpers, who stand beside God, deliberate, carry out His will, and guide the human race. There is no faith in an almighty God without faith in one or several angels. Angels are venerated in many other cultures as well. As a rule, they were thought to have wings and special divine features that set them apart from other beings. And, of course, alongside angels and fallen angels, religion and folklore contain other mysterious beings as well.

Ordinary angels, in the view of theologians, have no need of bodily necessities — food and drink, for instance. This absence of any pull toward material needs is also expressed in the fact that they are made of light: angels of mercy are formed of "nur" (cold light), unlike angels of severity, formed of "nar" (hot fire). In the early Meccan period, Iblis appears as one of the corrupted angels; some traditions distinguish between infallible angels and jinn, capable of sin.

All angels once lived among humans and other beings, and there was not one angel in paradise who did not originally dwell in a material body. Perhaps this was itself their trial from God.

Angels Among Humans

Living within a body, a human retains a connection to paradise through angels, and at least two evil spirits and two angels accompany every person. Temptation and the torment of the quiet inner voice are born of the struggle between evil spirits and angels. Because of humanity's corrupt nature, direct and open communication with angels is dangerous, and they can be seen only when spiritual sight opens — usually in moments when the very question of life and death is being decided, and so this happens very rarely. Angels are able to help and to stand near those who call upon them, for they always accompany a person, much like a guardian angel; to unite with

angels or to interact with them, they strive to guide each person toward what is acceptable, invisibly directing their own thoughts.

The Bible speaks of this in the Book of Genesis. Angels were first captivated by the beauty of earthly women and the way of life of men, and desire awoke in them to know this for themselves. Seized by burning passion, they abandoned their angelic nature and descended to earth, to unite with the daughters of men. Some of these angels gave themselves over to carnal desires and fell into the sin of idolatry. That is, they lost their vigilance before earthly temptations and fell so deeply in love with human life that they could no longer even conceive of heaven. When called to account, they even played the part of honest witnesses to their own deeds. But of course, a boundary must exist between the divine and the mortal. God did not approve of their choice, and they were cast down from heaven forever. For their deeds they could never again ascend to heaven.

Since both angels and demons were once human, angels retain a human form, and those who have seen these divine beings can confirm this. There is no single, special demon (or Satan): “In all of paradise there is no angel that was created originally either in hellfire, and no fallen angel that was created an angel of light and cast down to earth or, as people say, into the depths of the earth itself.”

Indeed, the angelic principle is able to influence the capacity for change and the diversity of genes in various animals and people.

You may be familiar with the comparison: “an atom is like a tiny solar system.” Where the rays of light of the surrounding galaxies cross, there lies the place called paradise.

Angels and the Structure of the Universe

A crystalline structure is a particular arrangement of atoms within a crystal. It is a multitude of atoms arranged in a particular way, repeating with a certain periodicity, all of them subject to a strict order. The angles between corresponding faces of a given crystal are constant and characteristic of that particular substance. Such is the law of crystals.

Angels of the cosmos may possess a similar structure. In the diagram below, the angels form the shape of a star, radiating light in a particular pattern. All of them proceed from one and the same point, from a single core. This core is God Himself. Thus the angels come to be gathered around God and directed by Him.

[Space for infographic: angels in the shape of a star, radiating from a single core of light.]

Let us try to find the highest path to paradise.

Paradise is a world where souls attain balance and goodness. Souls are elemental in their nature, much like atoms or molecules, and in paradise they can exist in the form of electric particles. Physical travel between galaxies requires an enormous amount of time and energy. This path can be served by an interstellar portal, which may lie directly within the atmosphere. A portal to paradise and to other galaxies is possible at the outer level of the atmosphere — in the exosphere. There the atmosphere thins and merges with open space. This layer lies at an equal distance from Earth to the Moon. Most planets of the solar system have a similar layer of rarefied atmosphere. There, solar energy passes into the thermosphere, is absorbed and broken down, releasing energy hundreds of times greater than its original strength. It is precisely through such a quantum leap that one can obtain the energy needed for the journey to paradise. Through this portal we might gain knowledge for the common good and for peace — and even travel into the future.

Next: Chapter 9 — “Fallen Angels.” From the general structure of the angelic world, the book turns to those who fell from it — and to a question this chapter will not resolve, but will sharpen: was their fall a sin, or another form of loyalty?

Chapter 9. Fallen Angels

This chapter is the thematic center of the book's whole angelology. In it, two traditions collide over one and the same gesture — the refusal to bow — and how an angel emerges from that gesture depends not on the refusal itself, but on what stands behind it.

What It Means to Be a Fallen Angel

A fallen angel is not a source of vice or evil, not a rejected or disgraced angel, but an emanation of God Himself. Our ancestors believed that such an angel had been first among the archangels. They believed in a single God, who entrusted the world to the watchful care of seven angels. A fallen angel is not the devil; he is simply a particular exception to the law. Which is to say — a different pattern of departure from the rules. An exception is not a mistake, but simply another way of making decisions. Some fallen angels are considered angels who were expelled or removed from heaven. They were cast down from paradise for failing to heed God's instruction. This is precisely how Iblis, too, was cast down from heaven — for disobedience to God.

On earth these fallen angels gave themselves over to carnal desires and fell into the sin of idolatry, and even killed an honest witness to their deeds. For these acts they were never again allowed to ascend to heaven. The fallen angels were guilty of overstepping the bounds of their own nature and their wish to leave heaven in order to experience earthly delights. It is said that these fallen angels are doomed to punishment and ruin for eternity.

It is also believed that those who chose to follow Lucifer became fallen angels. Once, in the Kingdom of Heaven, there lived a beautiful angel. Lucifer was the chief archangel. He knew every law and every subtlety of heaven's order. He had been entrusted with leading the heavenly choir, but in time he came to consider himself equal to God Himself. It was pride that led him into rivalry with the very being who had given him life. It is said that he rose up against God together with a third of the millions of angels, who chose him as their leader. One can only guess why these angels decided that Lucifer was stronger than their own Creator. This remains unknown to us, but, according to legend, they chose their own path, and that path led them into a chaos of darkness, into a lake of fire. They were cast down into hell, out of paradise. It was precisely this "fall" — expulsion from the Father's grace and from paradise, a casting down to earth and to other "dark" places — that made them "fallen" angels.

Lucifer: The Morning Star

On the other hand, Lucifer is an ancient name for the planet Venus. The word "Lucifer" is made of the Latin roots lux ("light") and fero ("I carry"). The ancient Romans called Venus by the name of one of their goddesses.

The planet Venus, visible only at dawn or dusk, was once thought by the ancient Romans to be two separate planets.

Accordingly, the “morning star” was called Lucifer. In the late Middle Ages, the concepts of “Lucifer” and “Satan” merged into one. This happened because of an allegorical reading of the fourteenth chapter, twelfth verse of the Book of Isaiah, where, under the image of the morning star, in comparison to the king of Babylon, Satan himself was understood to be meant.

Malak Taus: The Angel Who Would Not Serve

The first fallen angel known to myth was the Peacock — an angel worshipped as a god, for he was the first angel created of light, that is, the leader of the archangels. He was made of light and placed on earth, together with other angels, as guardian of the earth; he was also granted the title of leader of the archangels, and entrusted with all that happens on earth — it is he whom the Yazidis worship. The Peacock Angel (Malak Taus) was worshipped in the form of a beautiful bird — the peacock — and, it is said, in certain religious circles he was mistaken for a satanic image, displeasing to God. As it is written, the Yazidis themselves never believed the Peacock Angel to be God Himself, the Almighty, but only an emanation that appeared at the very beginning of time, when the world was created. Legend tells that, in bidding farewell to the Peacock Angel, all the inhabitants of heaven wept. In that same age the seven archangels were established.

It is said that at the very beginning of earthly days, the Peacock Angel emerged from God’s light in the form of a seven-colored rainbow, and only

later did God create six other angels out of light, to help the Peacock Angel govern the world. He is the guardian of Eden (paradise), and it was he who instructed Adam and Eve in human enlightenment and the mysteries of worship.

“Peacock” is a symbolic name, and a symbolic bird. He is covered in brightly colored feathers, and when he walks, everything about him breathes majesty. The peacock’s colors also echo the colors of the rainbow. Looking deeper, this blending of colors can be seen to reflect the multiplicity of this angel’s forms. It can equally reflect the various supernatural abilities of this angel. It is entirely understandable why the Peacock Angel is considered the most powerful of angels. No other can compare to him in this standing.

Thanks to melanin in the barbs of its feathers, the peacock’s males achieve their incredible beauty of coloring. It seems that these creatures are especially prone to major changes and varied combinations of genes.

Particles of melanin scatter light, and what we see changes depending on the angle from which we view the peacock. The barbules of the feather barbs straighten and curve so that their flat side faces outward. Its plumage is a blend of five hues, creating a sweet harmony of color transitions. The flesh of its feathers is almost immune to decay after death. This is precisely why, for centuries, the peacock has been considered a symbol of rebirth and resurrection. Like the phoenix, the peacock has often been linked to immortality and new birth, and has been held sacred in many cultures. Just as the phoenix is reborn from ashes, there is hope, too, for the peacock that dies.

In the ancient Yazidi Black Book, the Peacock Angel is bound up with other angels and with those who worship them. The Yazidis believe that God created the world and entrusted it into the hands of seven angels, chief among whom is the Peacock Angel, named Malak Taus. It is said that the Yazidi people believe in two gods: the creator (God) and his sons (the angels).

Malak Taus (Kurdish: مەلیک تاووس, Tawûsê Melek), also written Malik Tus, translated into English as the Peacock Angel, is one of the central figures of the Yazidi religion. In Yazidi accounts of creation, God created the world and entrusted its care to seven Sacred Beings, often called Angels, or heft sirr (“Seven Mysteries”), chief among whom is Tawûsê Melek, the Peacock Angel. The French anthropologist Zaim Henshelaoui, along with other researchers, believes that Malak Taus may correspond to the ancient Mesopotamian deity Tammuz.

Like many aspects of the mysterious Yazidi religion, the image of Tawûsê Melek admits of a wide range of differing interpretations. The “Yazidi Book of Revelation” (Kitêba Jelwa) — a text believed to have been written not by the Yazidis themselves (as with the “Yazidi Black Book”) in the early

twentieth century, but based on oral Yazidi tradition (though a translation of the text dating to the nineteenth century also exists) — is said to contain the very words of Tawûsê Melek himself; it states that he distributes duties, blessings, and misfortunes among people as he sees fit, and that it is not for the line of Adam to question his choice.

The Yazidis consider Tawûsê Melek an emanation of God and a good, benevolent angel, leader of the archangels, entrusted with the care of the world after he passed a trial and created the universe out of the Cosmic Egg. The Yazidis believe that Tawûsê Melek is not a source of evil or vice. They consider him the leader of the archangels, not a fallen or disgraced angel, but an emanation of God Himself. The Yazidis believe that the founder, or reformer, of their faith, Sheikh Adi ibn Musafir, was an incarnation of Tawûsê Melek.

The name Tawûsê Melek is also rendered as Malak Ta'us, Malak Tawus, Malak Tawwus, or Malik Taus. The word "Melek" is borrowed from Arabic and means "king" or "angel." The word "Taus" translates as "peacock" (in visual art and sculpture, Tawûsê Melek is depicted in the form of a peacock). Yet peacocks are not native to the lands where Tawûsê Melek is worshipped. Among early Christians, the peacock symbolized immortality — from the folk belief that its flesh does not decay after death — and this symbolism carried over into Yazidi belief as well. This is why images of the peacock adorn Yazidi shrines, gates, tombs, and places of prayer.

The Kitêba Chilwe (Book of Illumination), also known as the Book of Revelation, said to contain the very words of Tawûsê Melek, states that he distributes duties, blessings, and misfortunes according to his own will, and that it is not for the line of Adam to question him. Sheikh Adi ibn Musafir believed that his own spirit was one and the same as the spirit of Tawûsê Melek — that is, that he was an incarnation of this archangel. He is said to have declared:

"I was present when Adam lived in Paradise, and also when Nimrod cast Abraham into the fire. I was present when God said to me: 'You are ruler and lord upon the Earth.' God, in His mercy, granted me seven lands and the throne of the heavens themselves."

Yazidi accounts of creation differ from Jewish, Christian, and Islamic ones. The Yazidis believe that God first created Tawûsê Melek out of His own radiance (Ronahî), and that the six other archangels were created afterward. God commanded Tawûsê Melek to bow before no other being. Then God created the remaining archangels and commanded them to bring Him dust (Ax) from the Earth (Erd) and to form the body of Adam. Then God breathed life into Adam with His own breath and commanded all the archangels to bow before Adam.

The archangels obeyed — all except Tawûsê Melek. In response, Tawûsê Melek said to God:

“How can I submit to another being? I am made from Your radiance, while Adam is made from dust.”

Then God praised him and made him leader of all the angels and His deputy on Earth.

And so the Yazidis believe that Tawûsê Melek is God’s representative on the face of the Earth, and descends to Earth on the first Wednesday of the month of Nisan (April). The Yazidis believe that God created Tawûsê Melek on this very day, and celebrate it as their New Year. The Yazidis maintain that the command to bow before Adam was merely a trial for Tawûsê Melek, for if God commands something, it must inevitably come to pass. In other words: God could have simply forced him to submit to Adam, but instead gave Tawûsê Melek a choice — as a trial. They believe that their veneration and praise of Tawûsê Melek is a way of acknowledging his majestic and exalted nature. This concept is called Zanista Chiwanê (Knowledge of the Exalted). Sheikh Adi meditated upon the story of Tawûsê Melek and believed in him.

The Peacock Angel Under Suspicion

The Yazidi taboo on the Arabic word “Shaitan,” and on words containing the consonant sound (sh), has given rise to speculation about some connection between Tawûsê Melek and Iblis — though without any evidence. And this directly identifies Malak Taus with Azazel, Azrael, or Gabriel. In one Arabic manuscript, the name Gabriel is used as an alternate reading in place of “Malak Taus.” In Islamic tradition, Gabriel was given the title “peacock of paradise.”

Accusations of devil-worship gave rise to long centuries of brutal persecution, which forced Yazidi communities to concentrate in the mountainous regions of northwestern Iraq. The Yazidis are often called Satanists for venerating angels. The veneration of angels itself provokes differing opinions within Christianity as well. Some Christian traditions honor angels and saints, while others consider this a satanic rite, and so reject and persecute those who practice it. These opposing traditions believe that worship is due to God alone, not to angels. For it was God who created the angels, and man was made a little lower than the angels. Following this hierarchy, it would be a grave sin and a severe insult to the Creator of all things to venerate those very beings He made with His own hands. Another reason some Christian traditions condemn the veneration of angels lies in the belief that demons are able to appear in the guise of angels straight out of hell. Demons are considered fallen angels and deceivers. And so, wherever the veneration of angels is permitted and encouraged, many may be deceived by a demonic disguise. In the end,

certain teachings given by these fallen angels, posing as true angels of God, may cause harm to everyone. This is why it is forbidden.

The Legend of the Tears and the Pact with Satan

Legend says that the tears of the Peacock Angel are able to extinguish the very flames of Hell, and that through his intercession even a demon may ascend to Heaven. Legends tell how Satan tempted the peacock with the promise of teaching this beautiful angel certain powerful words, to free him from illness, old age, and death itself. It is now entirely clear that Satan is the most cunning of all creatures! Satan lures his victims with glittering promises, and if they are not careful, all may turn out badly. Satan promised to show the peacock these three words, if only he would grant him a safe and secret passage through the gates of Paradise and help him tempt Eve. Accusations of loving the devil gave rise to long centuries of brutal persecution, which forced people to take refuge in the remote mountainous regions of Central Asia.

The Peacock in Culture and Symbolism

Today the peacock is protected by law in a great many countries. Many peoples of India still consider the peacock a sacred bird. It is no surprise that, since 1963, it has been the official national bird of India. The peacock has long adorned Indian palaces and shrines, warding off evil spirits and venomous snakes. Further east, in China, the peacock was thought a herald of good fortune, believed able to drive away evil and evil spirits. In Hindu folklore the peacock was venerated and considered a symbol of the sun. According to legend, it is a bright, radiant bird — rays as bright and golden as the sun itself. And people were not wrong in this symbolism. In Egypt, this feathered bird was associated with sun worship and with the “all-seeing eye.”

Be that as it may, the peacock is perhaps best regarded as a true symbol of grandeur and wealth. It is said that once, in northern India, at the start of the seventeenth century, there existed a magnificent, jewel-encrusted Peacock Throne — the finest example of the power and standing the peacock symbolized. (Later, in the eighteenth century, it was seized by a Persian ruler as part of a vast spoil of war, but was later lost forever.) The peacock is also well known as a symbol of royal power and might in Persia. Among other examples of the symbol of royalty and wealth, the peacock can often be found on the reverse of Roman coins, where an empress was depicted.

As far back as the days of King Solomon, these graceful birds were brought to Palestine — the lands near Jerusalem — aboard his trading ships. It is precisely through Christian and Byzantine art that the peacock later came to be associated with the symbol of rebirth and paradise. It is also commonly known that the peacock annually sheds and regrows its feathers, and this too added to its fame as a symbol of the resurrection or rebirth of Christ. Christianity gives the peacock the meaning of a symbol of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the attainment of greater forgiveness of sins. According to legend, on the day of the resurrection the devil himself diluted wine with the blood of a peacock.

In Renaissance art, the peacock can be found as a symbol of the sin of Pride in depictions of the Seven Deadly Sins. It was precisely pride that turned angels into fallen angels; it is humility that makes heavenly messengers of men (Saint Augustine). From this tradition it is clear that the chief cause of the angels' fall was precisely pride, which God does not tolerate. In the Bible, in the Book of Proverbs, seven things are named. All seven of these sins are led by the spirit of arrogance. God does not love anything that is not humble before Him. And so those angels in whom pride was found were not deemed worthy to remain in heaven.

Two Forms of Disobedience

(A synthesis — the author's aside)

It is worth noting: Tawûsê Melek and the one we will meet in the next chapter, Iblis, perform, according to tradition, almost the very same gesture — both refuse to bow before a creature made of dust. But the outcome of this gesture is opposite. God praises Tawûsê Melek and makes him His deputy on earth; Iblis, He curses and casts down. The difference, if we trust these traditions, lies not in the refusal itself, but in what stands behind it. Tawûsê Melek's refusal, as the Yazidis believe, is rooted in loyalty to the first and highest principle — that only God may be worshipped, and no created being, whether angel or human — a principle for which he is willing to bring down God's wrath upon himself. Iblis's refusal, as we shall see

ahead, is rooted in something else: not loyalty to a principle, but wounded pride. One refusal is loyalty to a rule higher than a direct command. The other is pride defending itself. The myth, it seems, insists: not every act of disobedience is a sin, but neither is every act of disobedience holiness. The difference is settled not by the act itself, but by what it serves.

Next: Chapter 10 — "Iblis." Here the same question of disobedience will sound again, but with a different answer.

Chapter 10. Iblis

In the last chapter we saw one answer to the question of disobedience — the answer of Tawûsê Melek, whose refusal to bow was recognized as loyalty to a higher principle. Here is the opposite answer to the same question.

Iblis's Refusal

Iblis is a jinn, and a good one at that, made of fire; in the beginning of time he served God so faithfully that God allowed him to remain in the company of angels. When God sent the angels to drive the corrupting jinn from the earth, Iblis asked God to let him accompany the angels on this campaign against the wicked jinn, and God allowed him to descend to earth with the angels; there they destroyed all the jinn but a few. When they returned to heaven, God told the angels that He, creator of the world, was preparing to make a new ruler who would govern the earth, and that this ruler would be made of dust — but Iblis, hearing this from God, was not glad at all, for he had believed that he himself would be named by God as lord over the earth.

It is believed that jinn are spirits, but not angels. They are supernatural beings, not entirely pure in nature; they are often allied with the devil, causing misfortune, though some jinn are good and serve God. Jinn are able to take the form of any living or nonliving being: they can appear as animals, storms, shadows, can be half human or half beast, depending on what form they take. According to the Quran, jinn possess free will, just as humans do, and the jinn known as Iblis abused this freedom by refusing to bow before Adam when God commanded him to do so.

In the early Meccan period, Iblis appears as a fallen angel; some traditions distinguish between infallible angels and jinn capable of sin. Unlike the advantage granted by strength, the human being has an imperfection: the very capacity for sin is not a strength but a flaw, a weakness, an affliction. Sin has become a habit for humans, one to which Satan himself drives them, in order to lead them astray and win followers whom he can lead into hell on the Day of Judgment.

In religious theology it is said that when God commanded all the angels to bow before Adam, they obeyed at once, without question — all except Iblis,

who refused. When God asked him why he had not bowed before Adam as his Lord had commanded, he answered: “I am better than him [Adam], for I was created of fire, and he of dust, and this makes me superior to Adam.”

Iblis was given the chance to repent and show humility before God, but instead he asked God to grant him a lifespan lasting until the end of time, and power over Adam, and a kingdom in which people would serve him, so that he might lead humankind from the path of God and show God that people were no better than himself. After Iblis was cast out of heaven, and Adam was granted life in paradise together with Eve, Iblis came to Adam to persuade him to taste the fruit of the forbidden tree, but Adam refused and rebuked him for it. Then Iblis understood that he could not penetrate Adam’s mind. He turned to Eve and told her of the fruit of that tree, and they afterward tasted it, which led to their expulsion from paradise. God knew that Iblis would do this, and permitted it Himself. From the very time humans first appeared, Iblis has wandered the earth, seeking his next victim, one who will fall into his snare and stray from the true path. It is said that he still walks the earth to this day, and will do so until the very end, when he will have to answer for his deeds, as will all other evil beings.

When Iblis was in heaven, God once more commanded him to bow before Him, but he openly refused. Then God cursed him and cast him out of heaven, saying to Iblis: “My curse shall be upon you until the end of time.”

(Link to Chapter 9) Here we find the difference discussed above. Tawûsê Melek refused to bow before Adam in the name of a principle — that only God is to be worshipped — and for this he was exalted. Iblis refused to bow in the name of himself — “I am better than him” — and for this he was cursed. The words of both refusals are almost mirror images of one another, but in one sounds loyalty to a rule, and in the other, wounded precedence. The myth places them side by side deliberately: it seems to test whether the reader can tell them apart, for at first glance both acts look identical — as disobedience to a direct command.

Who Jinn Are

But since he is known as a jinn, some scholars argue that Iblis is not an angel at all, but a distinct, separate being, admitted into the company of heavenly messengers only as a reward for his past honesty. In this way they reject the very idea of fallen angels altogether and emphasize the purity of the heavenly messengers, citing certain sources that distinguish between reliable angels and jinn capable of sin. Nonetheless, the very concept of “jinn” cannot definitively exclude Iblis from the ranks of the angels.

Other scholars argue that a jinn is anything hidden from ordinary sight: both heavenly messengers and other unseen beings. In that case, we cannot exclude Iblis from the ranks of the angels. It is said that God granted Iblis’s request in order to reveal the weaknesses of humankind. It is also affirmed

that Iblis's attempts to lead people astray are permitted by the very authority of God. Iblis's efforts to deceive the servants of God, as a rule, are doomed to fail. The Quranic image of Iblis resembles another evil angel from the earlier Books of Jubilees: like Iblis, Mastema also asks God for permission to tempt the human race, and both are limited in their power — that is, unable to deceive the true servants of God.

However, the theme of Iblis's defiance does not originate in the traditions of the Watchers, but goes back to the "Cave of Treasures" — a work that, it appears, contains the principal explanation accepted in early general Christian theology regarding the heavenly fall of Satan. According to this explanation, Satan refuses to bow before Adam because he is "fire and spirit," and is at once cast out of heaven for it. Unlike the view that later came to dominate in Christianity, the notion that Iblis attempts to seize the throne of God Himself is foreign to Islam and, given its strict monotheism, simply unthinkable.

Unlike the angel of light, the peacock, who is born among peacocks, the angel of fire is born among humans. Such people are called "demonic" in European sources, and jinn, or genies, in eastern cultures.

A jinn, also spelled "jinnee"; Arabic جن — jinn, singular جني — jinni, are demonic spirits that dwell in an unseen world existing alongside the world of humans. In Western popular culture they are also called "genies." Western popular culture, however, does not go into much detail about these spirits. They are portrayed as sometimes kind, sometimes mischievous, but most often dwelling in lamps, lost in caves or forests.

The true origin of belief in jinn remains unclear. Some scholars of the Middle East believe that these were originally evil spirits dwelling in deserts and unclean places, often taking the form of animals. Others believe that they were once pagan nature deities, gradually pushed to the background as other gods gained greater significance. And yet many Arabs venerated jinn in the pre-Islamic period, though, unlike gods, jinn were not considered immortal.

A genie is held captive by whoever placed him there — most often a sorcerer, selfish enough to imprison such a powerful being and command it for the rest of his days. Whoever comes to possess the lamp becomes the next rightful master of the jinn's powers. As popular culture depicts it, a jinn can grant only three wishes.

But though their mortality places them beneath the gods, it seems that the veneration of jinn played an even greater role in the daily life of pre-Islamic Arabs than the veneration of the gods themselves. According to widespread Arab belief, it was precisely jinn who inspired soothsayers, pre-Islamic sages, and poets. Their own culture and society resembled the pre-Islamic Arab way of life: they had their own tribal chiefs, who protected allies and

avenged the killing of any member of their tribe or alliance. Although the powers of jinn exceed those of humans, it was considered possible for a human to kill a jinn in fair combat. It was believed that jinn were able to change shape, but were feared most in their invisible state, for then they could attack unseen. Jinn were also feared as a cause of various illnesses and mental afflictions. Julius Wellhausen noted that, according to belief, such spirits dwell in desolate, gloomy, and dark places, and that they were feared. One had to protect oneself from them, but no true cult was paid to them. Some scholars believe that notions of angels and demons were brought to Arabia by Muhammad himself and did not originally exist among the jinn. Amira El-Zein, on the other hand, argues that pagan Arabs were also familiar with angels, but that the word “jinn” itself was applied to all manner of supernatural beings from the most varied religions and cults; thus Zoroastrian, Christian, and Jewish angels and demons merged over time into the single concept of “jinn.” Al-Jahiz attributes to pre-Islamic Arabs the belief that jinn society consists of many tribes and clans, and that certain natural phenomena, such as storms, were explained precisely by their actions. It was also believed that jinn were able to protect people, marry them, abduct them, possess them, and kill them.

Created from smokeless fire, jinn form the third order of intelligent beings made by God, while the other two orders are angels, created of light, and humans, created of clay.

A jinn, as a rule, is invisible to humans and can travel enormous distances at incredible speed. It is believed that they inhabit a parallel world, favoring remote places — mountains, caves, trees, and deserts — where they form their own communities. Among the particular kinds of jinn are the shaitans (satans), ghouls, marids, and mighty ifrits.

There are many varieties of jinn. Beings such as genies and demons lead a way of life quite different from that of humans. There are six clans of jinn.

A Guide to the Six Clans of Jinn

(An appendix — set apart as a separate section for ease of reading)

Clan	Nature and power	Where they dwell	Form	Weaknesses and protection
True Jinn	the most numerous; power drawn from gold; able to fly	control most of Rabia and all of Wildfire	shift shape more slowly than ifrits	copper, agate
Ifrits	second most numerous,	abandoned places, the	instant shapeshifting	prayer, iron, ruby

Clan	Nature and power	Where they dwell	Form	Weaknesses and protection
	the most dangerous; hostile to the jann; power drawn from fire	Copper City	: lions, cobras, scorpions, hounds, beautiful women/warriors, sandstorms	
Jann	benevolent, drawn to light; eternal enemies of the ifrits, the nekrataals, and the ghouls	desert oases	white camels, warriors	— (the first to make contact with humans)
Marids	oldest and most revered; masters of weather, wind, and water	coastlines, water spouts	old men, porpoises, horses	copper, iron, jade
Nekrataals	second-oldest clan, the longest-lived; sow plague and despair; physically weaker than the others	swamps and volcanic lands	black camels, beautiful men and women	rely on cunning and deceit rather than strength
Ghouls	the lowest of the clans; draw power from the dead; sworn enemies of the jann	deserts, wastelands, dark corners of cities	pilgrims, travelers; the strongest transform into vultures	cat’s-eye stone (a talisman of sorcerers), iron; honor salt as a sign of hospitality

True Jinn, Marids, Nekrataals, Ghouls (left to right):

Beyond the six clans, tradition also speaks of other spirits of a related nature. **Weyards** are elemental beings that enhance the combined abilities of mages known as Adepts; there are four kinds, each bound to its own element — earth, fire, air, and water.

There are also jinn of other lands — spirits that, in some traditions, are bound to the continent of Elona (in particular, to the region of Tyria), typically guarding places filled with spiritual power: rivers, lakes, desert lands, estates, and treasure caves. Unlike the clans of Rabia, these guardian jinn often serve a particular place or lineage longer than their first masters live, and at times either forget their original orders or gain enough power to form their own goals.

Next: Chapter 11 — “Shaitan,” where the book completes its gallery of dark names, before turning to Satan and, at last, returning to humans and angels.

Chapter 11. Shaitan

Iblis, whom we left in the last chapter, is a person: he had a name, a word spoken before God, and a single act of disobedience for which he alone bears responsibility. Shaitan is something else. This is no longer one character but a collective name for an entire order of forces that, according to tradition, descend from Iblis, but act differently than he did — not through a loud refusal, but through a quiet, everyday whispering.

Who Shaitan Is

The next legendary fallen angel is called Shaitan; he represents everything hidden from ordinary sight: both angels and other unseen beings. Shaitan is imagined as an angel from another, different paradise. Just as evil itself is pursued — the devil, Satan, the fallen heavenly messengers — no one has ever caught this evil being in bodily form; only people have suffered. And yet people believe that when Shaitan was in fact caught, he wept, as a child weeps under blows.

It is said that the scourging of Shaitan was not physical, for he is a spirit, but he was punished spiritually, when driven out of people. He lives in the soul and body of a person, taking possession of them, and whispers to people to do evil, leading them from the true path; and to drive him from a human body, he is struck down spiritually, so that he cannot feel at peace within a person. Once he is driven from the body, he no longer has the power to turn a person against God, but it is said he can never sow evil in the souls of the righteous — only in those who fall into error together with him of their own will.

The Origin of the Word and Its Place Among the Jinn

The word “Shaitan” (Arabic نشَيْطَا) derives from the Hebrew ן ָטָ ָ ש (Satan), “accuser, adversary” (from which the English word Satan itself derives). The Arabic etymology, however, links this word to the root š-ṭ-n (“distant, astray”), giving it a theological sense — designating a being far from divine grace. In pre-Islamic Arabia, the term denoted an evil spirit, but was used only by poets who had contact with Jews and Christians. With the coming of Islam, the meaning of “shayatin” grew closer to the Christian concept of devils. A similar term, “shayatin,” appears in the Book of Enoch as well, where it denotes the hosts of the devil. Drawing on Islamic sources, the word “shaitan” can be translated either as “demon” or as “devil.” Among Muslim authors, the term can also apply to evil supernatural beings in general — to evil jinn, fallen angels, or Taghuts. In a broader sense, the term denotes anything that, from the standpoint of existence itself, represents an expression of evil. In hadith literature the shayatin are described as malicious forces closely bound to human beings, mentioned as inseparable companions of a Muslim’s daily life. A shaitan is assigned to every person (except Jesus), and it is said that shayatin are able to move through a person’s blood. In “Sahih Muslim,” five sons of Iblis are mentioned among the shayatin, bringing everyday misfortune: Tir, “who brings misfortune, loss, and injury”; Al-A’war, who incites debauchery; Sut, who instills lies; Dasim, who sows hatred between husband and wife; and Zalambur, who rules over marketplaces. The shayatin try to disrupt prayer or ritual ablution. Besides this, they may appear in dreams and torment people with fear. If a person yawns, they should cover their mouth, so that a shaitan cannot enter within. It is said that the sun rises and sets between the horns of a shaitan, and at that moment prayers should cease, for it is then that the gates of hell open. In “Sahih al-Bukhari” and “Jami at-Tirmidhi” it is said that the shayatin cannot harm believers during the month of Ramadan, for during that time they are chained in Jahannam (Hell). The shayatin make up one of three orders of supernatural beings in Islamic theology. But since, like the jinn, they possess the property of invisibility, some scholars place them in a single category of the supernatural. Nonetheless, the prevailing view among interpreters (mufassirun) distinguishes jinn from shayatin as follows:

While among the jinn one finds believers of various faiths (Muslim, Christian, Jewish, pagan, and so on), the shayatin are exclusively evil by nature.

Jinn are mortal and die, whereas shayatin die only when their leader ceases to exist. The father of the jinn is considered to be Al-Jann, and the father of the shayatin, Iblis.

The shayatin are creatures of hellfire, and although their origin, like that of the angels, is not directly mentioned in the Quran, Islamic scholars have

repeatedly maintained the view that the shayatin were created either from smoke or from hellfire itself. Like demons or devils in Christian theology, the shayatin are incapable of good and are bound exclusively to “evil.” Abu Mufti, in his commentary on Abu Hanifa’s “Al-Fiqh al-Absat,” writes that all angels, except Harut and Marut, are obedient to God, while all shayatin, except Ham ibn Him ibn Lakis ibn Iblis, were created evil from the outset. Only humans and jinn are created with “fitra” — an innate nature of choice — which means that neither angels nor shayatin possess free will, and are inherently set in opposition to one another.

Shaitan and the Inner Life of the Human Being

Some Sufi authors link the descriptions of the shayatin found in the hadith to states of the human soul. Building on the notion that shayatin reproduce by laying eggs within the human heart, Ghazali connected them to inner spiritual development. According to this view, the offspring hatched from these eggs, planted in the heart, grow and merge with the person, giving rise to precisely that sin for which the shaitan is responsible. He goes on to explain the distinction between divine inspiration and the temptations of the shayatin, arguing that every prompting must be tested by two criteria: first, whether it conforms to piety, and second, whether it conforms to the norms of sharia. He goes on to develop a whole esoteric picture of the world, presenting the human heart as the capital of the entire body, caught in ceaseless struggle between the forces of carnal desire, awakened by the shayatin, and the forces of reason (aql). Ali Hujwiri similarly describes the shayatin and the angels as a reflection of a person’s inner state: on one side, the shayatin and carnal desires (nafs), on the other, the spirit (ruh) and the angels.

Three Names, Three Roles

(An explanation — so the three figures do not blur into one)

By this point the book has named three dark figures in a row — Iblis, Shaitan, and (in the next chapter) Satan — and it is easy to lose track of how they differ from one another. It is worth separating them out plainly: Iblis is a person and a single act — that very refusal to bow, which occurred once, at a particular moment in the myth. Shaitan is not a person, but a function and a multitude: a collective name for the spirit-tempters, the “sons” of Iblis, who commit no single great sin, but day after day incline people toward small ones — toward discord in a marriage, toward a lie, toward a dishonest deal. If Iblis is the cause, risen up once, then the shayatin are its countless effects, scattered through everyday life. Satan, whom the book will turn to next, is no longer an act or a multitude, but a name — the one under which these same forces are most widely known outside the Islamic tradition: the image in which the West has grown accustomed to seeing the adversary of God as a whole. Three names —

three scales of the same thing: a single act, an everyday dispersion, an all-encompassing symbol.

When all is said about the angels, it remains to say that they are spirits God created to serve as His messengers and to worship Him even before the appearance of humans, and when He created humans too, the angels' labor did not end there, for they, unlike humans, cannot die. Angels are a pure form of light, while jinn are created of fire and other natural elements.

Next: Chapter 12 — "Satan," where the same evil that has already appeared to us under the names of Iblis and Shaitan will appear under a name most readers know best of all.

Chapter 12. Satan

The third and final of the book's dark names. If Iblis is a person and an act, and Shaitan a multitude and a function, then Satan, as this chapter will show, is more a question than an answer: a name that different traditions have filled with such different content that, by the chapter's end, the book itself honestly admits — there is no single, clear image behind it.

Satanaya: A Different Name, a Different Story

In ancient times there existed an old legend — the Nart sagas — in which Satanaya was the mother of the holy Narts, a word meaning "hero," a man who rides a white horse. Satanaya held power over her children; she is portrayed in the light of a true matriarch.

It is worth noting right away: despite the similarity of name, the Satanaya of the Nart sagas is a benevolent, maternal figure, in no way connected to the Satan we will discuss next. This is more a coincidence of sound than a kinship of images — and a good reminder that not every resemblance of names signifies a kinship of essences.

Satan in the Bible: Accuser and Dragon

In the Abrahamic religions, Satan is linked to the image of the Devil — a being who inclines people toward sin or falsehood. This image, known as Satan, first appears in the Tanakh as a brilliant accuser, one of the sons of God, subordinate to Yahweh, who accuses the people of Judah at the heavenly court and tests the loyalty of Yahweh's followers by making them endure suffering.

As the Bible states, in the Book of Revelation of the New Testament, Satan is not a historical figure; his name, however, has repeatedly been applied to a wide range of empires. Satan has no connection at all to the fallen angels.

In the Bible, in the Book of Revelation, Satan is presented as the ruler of the Roman Empire and the ultimate cause of all evil on earth. Some Christians connect Satan with the number 666, called the Number of the Beast in chapter 13 of Revelation. However, the true number of the beast is 616, and the use of the number 666 in the Book of Revelation has been interpreted as a reference to the Roman emperor Nero, since 666 is the numerical value of his name in Hebrew.

Chapter 12 of Revelation describes a vision of the Great Red Dragon — an evil beast with seven heads, crowns, and an enormous tail, who pursues the Woman of the Apocalypse. This woman gives birth to a male child, who is threatened by a winged serpent, identified with Satan himself, wishing to devour the child the moment he is born. When the child is carried up to heaven, the woman flees into the wilderness, which leads to the “War in Heaven,” in which the angels cast the winged serpent down. In his rage the dragon wages war against “the rest of her offspring.” This alludes to the Book of Daniel, where the biblical apocalypse joins historical prophecy to an eschatology of boundless scope and political meaning.

Christian theologians interpreted the fallen angels as the embodiment of evil — Satan, who drew a third of the stars of heaven down with him. They saw evil and called Satan anyone who held power without human form, for he cannot be seen — he is spiritual by nature, unless he takes on a human image. It was said that he dwells within the bodies of the unrighteous and turns them against God, rendering such people unworthy before God.

In Revelation, chapters 7–9, Satan suffers defeat in the War in Heaven against Michael and his angels: “and the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.” Yet nowhere is it said that Satan was an angel — only a spirit, cast out of heaven. Nowhere in the New Testament are the fallen angels directly identified with demons. But by joining together references to Satan, evil spirits, and angels, early Christian interpreters came to compare the fallen angels to evil spirits, of whom Satan was considered the leader.

In the Gospel of Luke, 10:18, it is said that “Satan fell from heaven like lightning,” and in the Gospel of Matthew, 25:41, “the devil and his angels” are mentioned, who will be cast into perdition. Each of the Synoptic Gospels calls Satan the leader of the demons. The Apostle Paul, in 1 Corinthians 6:3, says that there are angels who will be judged, implying the existence of malevolent angels. This means there are fallen angels as well, who sided with Satan, and at the end of time all of them will be judged and punished. In 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 1:6, angels are mentioned in passing who transgressed against God and await punishment on the Day of Judgment. In the Book of Revelation, chapter 12, Satan is described as a mighty red dragon, whose “tail drew a third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth” — that is, Satan is that very dragon who rose to devour the part of the star that had been sent to earth.

Origen and other Christian writers connected the fallen morning star of Isaiah 14:12 to Jesus’s exclamation in Luke 10:18, that he “beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven,” as well as to the passage on the fall of Satan in Revelation 12:8–9. The Latin word “Lucifer,” as it was rendered in the Vulgate of the late fourth century, later gave its name to the fallen angel.

Christian tradition connected Satan not only with the image of the morning star from Isaiah 14, but also with the denunciation of the ruler of Tyre in Ezekiel 28:11–19, where he is spoken of as one who was once an “angel.”

According to Christian tradition, the rulers of various nations have also been called fallen angels. Among them — Lucifer, Nero, Israel, Judah, and others. All of these figures were suspected of pride or vanity, and so were called fallen angels. In Jewish tradition, Israel was considered one of the first angels and stood at the gates of paradise. This is why, in some writings, he later became a fallen angel as well. And since the Jews revered Judas, it seems that he, too, was thought a fallen angel — a disciple of their Son of God. It was said that after Lucifer’s fall, many other angels fell with him, to help him rule the world together and lead people astray on earth.

The Church Fathers hold that “no modern analysis of the Book of Isaiah or the Book of Ezekiel considers that Isaiah 14 or Ezekiel 28 contains information about the fall of Satan”; the fall of Satan itself is considered a punishment from God, for God knew that Satan wished for people on earth

to worship him. In falling from heaven, he did not fall alone — he drew a great many angels down with him, that they might help him lead people astray and mislead them on earth.

In the Second Temple period, the word “satan” was used in the Hebrew Bible to denote human enemies and the adversary of God — that is, the one who forever opposes God’s will, destroying all that is good.

Watchers and Nephilim

The very notion of fallen angels appears, for the most part, in works dating to the Second Temple period — between 530 BCE and 70 CE: in the Book of Enoch, the Book of Jubilees, and the Qumran Book of Giants, as well as, possibly, in Genesis 6:1–4. There, magnificent beings (angels), numbering around two hundred, called the “Watchers,” are mentioned, who were charged with keeping watch over the earth — but they did not carry out what had been commanded of them, and instead began committing wicked deeds with human beings, and sin and corruption spread across the earth among humankind.

This begins in chapter 4 of the Book of Daniel, where “watchers, holy ones” are mentioned three times — twice in the singular. It is said that these watchers live in a cave somewhere on earth and, at the end of time, will bear the wrath of God. Some scholars believe that the Jewish tradition of fallen angels arose even earlier than this, even in written form. In the Book of Enoch, only three fallen angels are named — Azazel, Azza, and Uzza. In the main body of the Book of Enoch, it is said that they practiced divination on earth, thereby spreading corruption. Unlike the main Book of Enoch, the cause of their fall is not mentioned there, and later they also appear in heaven, protesting Enoch’s presence. In the Book of Enoch these Watchers “fell” after being “enchanted” by earthly women. When the angels were sent to earth to care for it and maintain order, they disobeyed this command and fell into sin, sharing their bed with the daughters of men, which later gave rise to new beings — half-breeds, half human.

There are tales of half-breeds (Nephilim) — half human, half angel by blood. They are able to recognize gifted sorcerers and witches. They are able to grasp the subtlest details and particulars, able to command people’s minds and influence their feelings. They are granted the highest abilities, inherited from the sons of God (the angels).

It was then that the Nephilim appeared on earth — after the sons of the Lord (angels) entered into carnal union with the daughters of men, who bore them children. According to this book, angels united with earthly women, giving rise to a whole race of half-angels, half-humans, known as Nephilim. It is said that the Nephilim grew and came to be called heroes of the ancient wars; it was also explained that the Nephilim were giants, that

is, possessed of enormous size. They differed from other people, for they did not belong to the human race, but were like demigods.

It is said that the Nephilim closely resemble Perseus — the Greek demigod, born half human, son of a queen and Zeus, the god of weather, who descended from heaven in the guise of a king to lie with the queen. The Nephilim resemble the son of Zeus as well — with the sole difference that they were giants and warriors.

The Sabbatic Goat, Baphomet — an occult idol

So in truth, there is no clear definition either of Satan himself, or of his nature.

A Gothic gargoyle

Next, and for the last time, the book shifts its scale once more: from galleries of dark names, back to humans and angels, to where it all began.

Chapter 13. Humans and Angels

The final chapter of the book's mythological section — and so the natural place to bring together everything spoken of across all thirteen chapters: the Great Feeling of the first chapter, the elements of Part I, the hydrogen of Adam and Eve, and the angels and jinn of the final chapters. Here the book, for the last time, asks not "what happened," but "what does this mean for you, the reader."

Why Humans Need Angels

The wish to worship beings beyond this world seems to be built into the human being from birth. There is a need to offer praise to that which is higher and wiser than us. There is no faith in an almighty God without faith in one or several angels. And yet, for all the universality of belief in angels, different religions hold different notions of these beings. In some religions, angels are venerated and worshipped; in others, worship of angels is forbidden. And angels have proven themselves worthy of such veneration,

though in some faiths this is considered impermissible. Angels are depicted as all-knowing and supremely wise; as a rule, they appear to people bearing certain instructions from God, and every encounter with an angel may be accompanied by a miracle or a strange occurrence. Sometimes angels come to bless humankind for fulfilling God's will. In other cases they come to render justice upon the guilty party, siding with the wronged. This clearly shows that angels are, in many ways, much like human beings, aside from their divine nature. Just as a human is capable of both good and evil, so too are angels. Just as a human is subject to God, so too are angels. The main thing that sets humans apart from angels, besides divine power itself, is that angels are able to take on different forms, whereas humans are confined to their mortal body. In sacred texts there are stories of angels taking on human form. It is impossible to fully understand why they need to hide their true form. It is believed that angels walk the earth among us — this notion is widespread across many religions, and it, too, encourages people to be kind to strangers, since angels may be wandering the earth in the guise of people no one knows.

The angelic order consists of a great many different ranks of angels. Much like the human race, it contains a multitude of different beings, united by this venerable order. There is a hierarchy of its own as well. Perhaps the world of angels is not so very different from the world of humans. Archangels are considered the most powerful; there are seraphim and cherubim. There are angels created solely to administer justice through death. There are angels created to give food and water to lost travelers. But all of them act by a single instruction and bond with one God. There are higher angels and lower angels.

Behind every event in the material world stand angels. Two chief forces are at work in the universe — the forces of good and evil. Angels exist to maintain balance and justice. The universe turns on energies. When bad energy is released through a person's inaction or actions — intentionally or unwittingly — angels find a way to restore the order of energies, replacing bad energy with good.

Hierarchy and the Battle for the Soul

It is worth noting that within every human being lies the capacity for both good and evil. In the end, it is precisely what we choose that determines whether we are weak or strong. Our conscience is a living part of our mind, and it wages an eternal struggle between good impulses and tempting tricks. Before every act a person is about to commit, their angel presents the voice of reason, while the opposing voice comes from an evil spirit. Another affliction of humankind is the inability to distinguish the true voice of reason, which can bring no small amount of trouble. Evil spirits differ from angelic beings, but they always try to lure their prey by imitating angels. When a person is not spiritually strong enough to distinguish these

two voices, this can lead to a serious mistake. This happens when an evil spirit offers an extremely tempting and radiant thought; at first glance it may seem beautiful and achievable, but on closer inspection its whole futility will be revealed. If a person does not measure this thought against reality, they may end up following the evil spirit, which will later abandon them the moment they are in trouble.

Another trait that distinguishes the presence of angels from the presence of evil spirits is the very manner in which thoughts are presented. Angels are a symbol of good, and so their thoughts bear the best fruit, if followed properly. They are not inclined to manipulate, coerce, or impose. They possess a godlike nature, and so it is contrary to their very essence to compel or lure people against their will. They only offer or suggest, leaving the person free to choose or to refuse. But any voice that manipulates, distorts possibilities, intimidates, and coerces — that is the voice of an evil spirit. These tricks make whoever falls for them dependent on them and afraid to think for themselves. This manipulative, insidiously coercive nature is clearly visible in the story of Eve and the serpent. Eve was alone in the garden, and needed no other guidance at all, but the serpent presented her with his thought and inclined her to go against God’s commands. Like the serpent, evil spirits always have their own design. It is very important to learn to distinguish which voice is speaking through our conscience.

Proof that humans, too, are in some sense divine can be found in a great many life stories, though science cannot prove such claims. But there is nothing scientific in religion itself and its associated beliefs; at first glance this may seem absurd, since science requires a connection between physical proof and rational explanation. And yet human experience makes one think there is something more to our world than what meets the eye. The supernatural exists, but it stands above us, and speaks only to those whose minds are attuned to believe in it.

At first, God created the angels to dwell beside Him in heaven; they are His sons and messengers. He created them to worship Him and carry out His will. Angels were not created the way humans were. Humans were created to multiply across the earth and hold dominion over all that is upon it, and this is possible only through bodily union. Angels were not intended for this. They were created for weightier matters. But angels, too, are given to live, much as humans do, so that they might taste the full breadth of human experience, to understand what it means to be mortal. In this form they are subject to the primary human needs: hunger, attraction, the need for shelter and clothing. In this state they are not so very different from humans, and are able to know the world just as humans do.

People have shared with one another dreams and visions of paradise, believed to be God’s abode; people have also shared dreams of encounters with angels and demons. This is possible only because we remain connected

to a world above us even now. This makes the human being a kind of vessel that preserves a bond with the higher world. And though he is able to make his own decisions, able to use natural forces to build a new, lasting world, at times a person loses their way and falls under the influence of outside forces stronger than himself.

Angels in Art and Philosophy

Angels have also been depicted in a great many paintings and sculptures. Most often they are shown as very tall figures, robed in white or black, with a pair of shining wings. Sometimes they are depicted with infant faces. This stirs people's curiosity and makes the subject of angels so captivating. For example, the famous Italian artist Leonardo da Vinci portrayed divine beings in his work "Angels and Demons."

The Jewish philosopher Maimonides set out his view of angels in his work "The Guide for the Perplexed."

Aristotle, for his part, arrives at a proven conclusion that God — glory and majesty be to Him — does not act through direct contact, but through incorporeal intellects, and that these intelligences are the "angels close to Him," intermediaries between Him and all the bodies of this world.

Following Aristotle's reasoning, one may accept that God does not enter into direct contact with humans, for He created the angels precisely to serve as intermediaries. In various religions, God is described as absolute light. No one has seen Him or touched Him. It is believed that even the angels themselves have never seen His true form. And if even these divine beings are not pure enough to see God, then humans have no chance of it at all. A human is too weak and, by nature, too presumptuous to become a witness to the glory of His true being. And so the very existence of angels serves but one purpose — to serve God, and to serve those worthy among humankind.

Maimonides had his own interpretation of the Bible. He writes that a wise person sees that what the Bible and the Talmud call "angels" are merely figures of speech for the various laws of nature — those very principles by which the physical world operates.

— For all forces are angels! How blind, how ruinously blind are the simple-minded! Tell one who considers himself a sage of Israel that the Deity sends an angel who enters a woman's womb and forms the fetus there, and he will consider it a miracle and accept it as a sign of the Deity's greatness and power, even though he believes the angel to be a body of fire, a third the size of the whole world. All this, in his view, is possible for God. But tell him that God placed within the very seed the power to form and determine these organs, and that this itself is the angel, or that all forms are born of the Active Intellect, and that this itself is that angel — the "governor of the

world," of whom the sages endlessly speak — and he will retreat in confusion.

The Omnipotence of God: A Dispute Among Philosophers

Power is influence, and it must act upon something — at least, if by power we mean influence, governance; but that "something" subjected to governance cannot be wholly inert, for if it is merely passive, there must exist at least some slight resistance to this very "absolute" power — for how can power be absolute if it meets no resistance at all? (Charles Hartshorne, disputing with Plato, 247E).

Omnipotence is the property of possessing unlimited power. The word itself derives from the Latin "omnipotens," meaning "all-powerful."

God is called omnipotent: but anything that implies a contradiction does not fall under the very concept of divine omnipotence, for such power cannot include what is simply impossible.

Anything that does not imply a contradiction does not exceed the bounds of divine omnipotence, for what is contradictory cannot possess even the appearance of possibility. And this does not contradict the words of the angel who said, "Nothing is impossible with God" — it is precisely in this sense that God is called omnipotent, while anything that implies a contradiction does not fall under the very concept of divine omnipotence.

Thousands of years ago, nature itself possessed boundless power. In our own day, political games know no limits, and God is no longer considered omnipotent. In philosophy it is generally held that the very concept of omnipotence cannot be fully grasped by reason.

Epilogue

Remember the stone from the very beginning of this book — a lifeless star that wanted nothing but to live and to love in that very instant. Everything that followed — the fairies and the dragon, the apocalypse of Andromeda, Adam and Eve on opposite poles of the same argument about exchange and labor, Eve and Ifrit, the moon and the hormones, angels who refused to serve, and angels who whisper from the shadows — all of it was the same question, asked anew at every turn: what will you do with your power?

Adam and Eve, if you recall, never did find one another in this world — but Eve left humankind one rule that can be broken: if people learn to choose their partners by heart, rather than by calculation, Adam and Eve will meet again at last. Perhaps this is not about two particular people long ago. Perhaps it is about the fact that every time someone chooses labor over

exchange, trust over fear, hydrogen finds its partner once more, and somewhere in another galaxy two more stars draw together.

The element this book began with was longing — not a ready-made answer. That longing has stayed with you past the last page too. What you do with it is no longer for the myth to decide, but for you.

Questions for self-reflection

- If you had to name one “element” of your own fate — not of your character, but of your fate itself — what would it be?
- Return to the first question of the Prologue to Part I. Has your answer to it changed, now that you have read the whole book?

APPENDIX D. A MAP OF THE UNIVERSE AND A GLOSSARY OF NAMES

A Map of the Worlds

[Space for a final infographic: a single map of the universe, bringing together all the locations below — the human galaxy at the center, the other worlds arranged around it by direction, as described in Chapter 1.]

The human galaxy — the center of the universe on the myth’s map; all the other solar systems are arranged around it (Ch. 1).

Beastoria — the galaxy to the right of the human galaxy; home of fairies, elves, and angels, a world of light and goodness (Ch. 1, 2).

Andromeda — the galaxy above the human one, marked on the map as the darkest; home of the dragons and dinosaurs, once ruled by Draco. After the apocalypse — ruins and cosmic dust (Ch. 1–3).

Paradise — not a galaxy, but a place at the edge of the universe where the light of seven surrounding galaxies crosses; here Adam and Eve were created and raised before being resettled on separate stars (Ch. 4).

Earth — the third star of the solar system; where the creator settled Adam, shaping his body from earthly clay (Ch. 4).

Saturn — the sixth star of the solar system, the “green world”; its people are made of the leaves of a tree and can heal mind and body with plants (Ch. 4).

Neptune — the eighth star of the solar system, a world condensed out of clouds; its people can fly, possess a gift for hypnosis, and connect with humans in dreams (Ch. 4).

Jupiter and **Mars** — mentioned as stars tied to particles of the souls of Adam and Eve's children: to the star Jupiter, the second daughter (later the wife of Sixteenth); to the energy of Mars, the youngest son, Twenty-Eighth (Ch. 5).

Rabia — the desert homeland of most clans of jinn; also home to the abandoned Copper City, where the ifrits flourish (Ch. 10).

Wildfire — a region that, along with most of Rabia, is controlled by the True Jinn (Ch. 10).

Elona (in particular the region of **Tyria**) — a continent home to special guardian jinn who watch over places: rivers, lakes, caves, and estates — unlike the nomadic clans of Rabia (Ch. 10).

Glossary of Names and Terms

Adam — the first man, the "Alpha Male," a compound of hydrogen; believes all relationships are built on exchange (Ch. 4–6).

Azazel, Azza, and Uzza — three fallen angels mentioned in the Book of Enoch; on earth they practiced divination, thereby spreading corruption (Ch. 12).

Alpha Male / Alpha Female — the names under which Adam and Eve appear in the chapter "Eve and the Angel," when the discussion turns to their role as archetypes of the human race (Ch. 6).

Andromeda — see "A Map of the Worlds."

Bianca — one of the three fairies sent by King Frien to Draco; she has four wings (Ch. 2, 3).

Weyards — elemental beings that enhance the abilities of mages known as Adepts; tied to the four elements (Ch. 10).

Gaia — Eve's longtime friend and midwife, the only one to openly call Ifrit a demon to her face (Ch. 6).

Ghouls — the lowest of the six clans of jinn; they draw power from the dead, honor hospitality, and revere salt (Ch. 10).

Twenty-Eighth — the youngest son of Adam and Eve, kind and clever; husband of his eldest sister, rival of Sixteenth (Ch. 5).

Djann — the name Eve gave to the girl who died from Ifrit's cruelty at their first meeting (Ch. 6). Not to be confused with the jann clan (see below).

Jann — a benevolent clan of jinn, drawn toward light; enemies of the ifrits, the nekrataals, and the ghouls (Ch. 10).

Draco — king of the dragons of Andromeda; his death at the end of "Apocalypse" is called "an act of love" (Ch. 1–3).

Eve — the first woman, the "Alpha Female," a compound of hydrogen; believes relationships are built on labor and mutual love (Ch. 4–7).

Iblis — a jinn created of fire; refused to bow before Adam out of a sense of superiority, and was cursed for it (Ch. 9–10).

Ifrit (Efriti) — a fallen angel, an embodiment of fire; Eve's lover across many centuries (Ch. 6). Also — the name of the second most powerful and most dangerous clan of jinn (Ch. 10); the two meanings are linked in the text, but not identical.

Lucifer — the name of the chief archangel who rebelled against God; also the ancient name of the planet Venus (the "morning star") (Ch. 9).

Malak Taus / Tawûsê Melek — the Peacock Angel, worshipped by the Yazidis; refused to bow before Adam out of loyalty to monotheism, and was exalted for it (Ch. 9).

Marids — the oldest and most revered clan of jinn, masters of weather, wind, and water (Ch. 10).

Miyon — a worm from an oxygen galaxy who, together with Frien, spoke the spell that destroyed Draco (Ch. 3).

Michael — the angel who told the fairies that Draco could not be redeemed (Ch. 2).

Nekrataals — the second-oldest clan of jinn, the longest-lived; sow plague and act through cunning rather than force (Ch. 10).

Nephilim — giants born of the union of the fallen angel Watchers and earthly women; half human, half angel (Ch. 12).

Satan — in the Western tradition, a symbol and leader of evil; the book explicitly separates him from Iblis and Shaitan as "the name under which these forces are most widely known" (Ch. 11–12). Not to be confused with Satanaya.

Satanaya — the mother of the Narts in a separate epic tradition unrelated to the biblical Satan; a benevolent, maternal figure (Ch. 12).

Watchers — roughly two hundred angels sent to watch over the earth, who fell into sin with earthly women; the Nephilim descend from them (Ch. 12).

Frien — king of the fairies of Beastoria (Ch. 2–3); also the name of the seventh son of Adam and Eve, in whom, according to the book, this same wizard was reincarnated, later going on to defeat the dragon (Ch. 5).

Charmina — a fairy with eight wings, the strongest of the three envoys sent to Draco (Ch. 2).

Shaitan — a collective name for the spirit-tempters, the “sons” of Iblis, active in a person’s everyday life (Ch. 11).

Sixteenth — the middle son of Adam and Eve; took part in the plot against Draco in the form of a worm; unhappy in marriage to Jupiter, consumed by envy of his brother’s family (Ch. 5).

Jupiter — as the name of a star: see “A Map of the Worlds”; as the name of a daughter of Adam and Eve: the second daughter, later the wife of Sixteenth (Ch. 5).